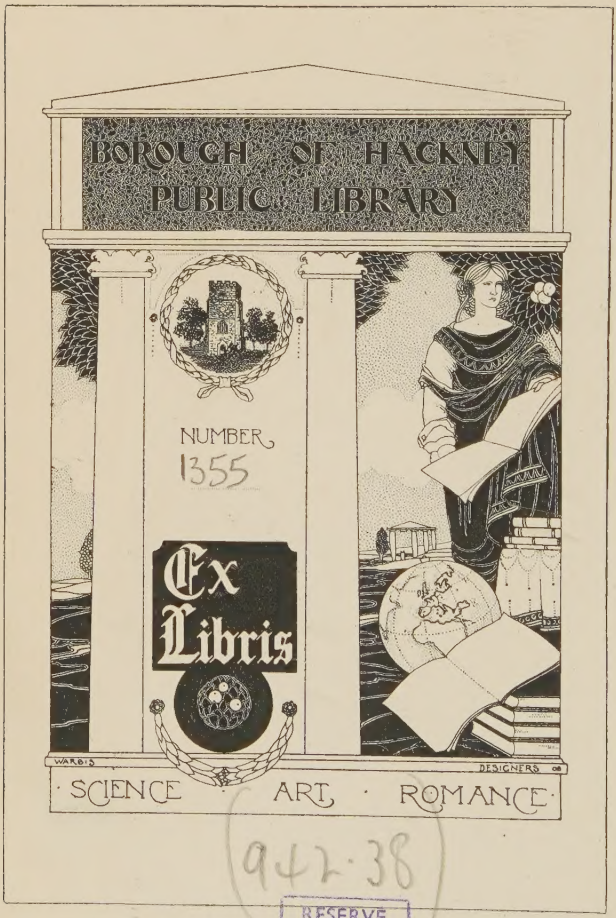
Memorials of Old Somerset



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MEMORIALS OF OLD SOMERSET

EDITED BY

F. J. SNELL, M.A.

Author of "A Book of Exmoor," etc.
and Editor of "Memorials of Old Devonshire"

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
BEMROSE & SONS LIMITED, 4 SNOW HILL, E.C.
AND DERBY
1906

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TO

THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUESS OF BATH

LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET

THESE MEMORIALS ARE

BY PERMISSION

DEDICATED

PREFACE

THE object of the present volume is to provide a conspectus of the principal historical and archæological interests of the county of Somerset. These, however, are so rich and varied that the Editor has found it beyond his power to include between its covers all the attractive topics that might be treated. Still, the work, if not actually encyclopædic, is fairly comprehensive, and its scope is certainly wider than that of any similar publication, while it is far more authoritative. The different writers have attempted to deal with their subjects in a literary, as well as scientific, spirit. Nothing has been assumed that a person of good education may not be reasonably expected to know; and, conversely, as the writers, in most instances, are either well-known authorities or particularly acquainted with their respective subjects, it may be confidently anticipated that the results of their labours will be to "make the bounds of knowledge wider yet," even for those residents possessing an antecedent familiarity with some of the topics.

All the papers, with two exceptions, have been specially written for "Memorials of Old Somerset," and, conformably with the aim of the series, in a manner adapted to the cultivated general reader. The two exceptions are

Mr. Alexander Gordon's "Ancient Stone Crosses," which originally appeared in *The Reliquary*, and "Old Mother Shipton's Tomb." Of the former it is needless to say more than that it would have seemed a pity not to preserve in a permanent and easily accessible form a charming article, charmingly illustrated.

With regard to the latter, the late Mr. William George, a devoted and very capable antiquary, re-published in a brochure a set of letters, etc., chiefly but not entirely from his own pen, which had been addressed to the *West Somerset Free Press*. These letters represent a gradual progress from profound obscurity to complete enlightenment, and the whole credit of the achievement thus signalised must be assigned to Mr. George's learning and persevering research. The pamphlet, however, is an exhibition of scholarship in dishabille, and it was resolved by those responsible for the production of the volume that a process of re-casting was essential. With the consent of Mr. George's family, the task was undertaken by the Editor, who put the material in shape, but, apart from minor alterations, the original phraseology has been retained, and the changes effected have been in the direction of pruning superfluities and irrelevancies and transposing parts and passages in a way that Mr. George himself would probably have done if he had taken up the subject *de novo*.

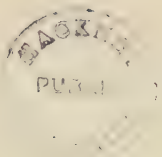
To commend one or two contributors by name would generally be invidious, but the Editor will not be misunderstood if he expresses satisfaction at the kind help

he has received from the venerable Canon Church, whose intellect is as keen as in his younger days; whilst Mr. Tyte, a veteran professional writer, still shows remarkable versatility. To these and his other able coadjutors, whose work speaks for itself, the Editor tenders warm acknowledgments; nor must he fail to thank Mr. Charles Tite for advice which has been invariably most judicious, and for the generous loan of valuable prints.

The photographs of Wookey Hole by Mr. H. E. Balch, who has kindly lent them, may be regarded as the first instalment of a work on the Mendip caverns in general —a subject of extreme interest, of which Mr. Balch is a master.

F. J. SNELL.

Tiverton,
June, 1906.



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HISTORIC SOMERSET

By the Editor

TO a traveller Somerset has much the same attraction as Holland. True, it is not all flat, yet the typical scene is ever the turf-clad moor, with its long "rhines" and invariable willows. That is the Somerset on which one looks down from the central peak of the Glastonbury Tor, with Mendip in the far dim vista. The broad pleasance of Taunton Dene, worthily named the Garden of England, and the happy hunting-grounds of Exmoor and Quantock, are also integral parts of the county; and east and south, round Yeovil and round Chard, are many lovely nooks, not to mention the superb beauty of the Avon. Still, the region of the peat and the gorges of Cheddar stand out distinct and individual. They are the heart and midriff of the land; in an imaginative sense, they make Somerset —once a fief of the sea.

If we turn from the natural to the animal kingdom, we shall be rewarded with discoveries of transcendant interest. To-day the red deer of Exmoor are the only large game that yet run wild in England, but the spade has brought to light abundant remains of fauna now wholly extinct or relegated to the tropics. That in prehistoric times herds of wild horses roamed over the plains of Somerset, making this the Argos of Britain, awakens little surprise, but the revelations of the hyæna den near Wookey are fairly amazing. It is hardly conceivable that there was ever a period when, in Britain, and in Somerset, the lion, the bear, the rhinoceros, the gigantic ox, the

reindeer, the Irish elk, and the huge woolly mammoth were at large. And with them was man. Compared with the teeth and claws of his fierce enemies, his natural means of defence how absurdly inadequate! Even his artificial weapons of bone, chert, and flint, his bows and his arrows, seem not very promising aids in his encounters with the big brutes which beset him on every hand. But he was acquainted with the use of fire, and the knowledge helped him to survive. The savages of that remote past were not of our race—they were neither Kelts nor Saxons; and since then Somerset has been engulfed by the waves.

The Glastonbury lake-village is a relic of much later date, and has yielded manifest tokens of a comparatively high civilisation, which are stored, as they are harvested, in the local museum. The construction of those dwellings is believed to have preceded the Roman invasion by not more than a century or two, but the state of culture to which the fen-dwellers attained was in no way affected by Græco-Roman influences. It was indigenous—purely their own.

The legend of Bladud forms a pleasing exordium to the story of Bath, but, needless to say, cannot be seriously regarded by the historian, who will pay far more attention to the considerable traces of Roman occupation to be found in or near the Stall Street of that fashionable city. The large rectangular bath first discovered in 1754, and completely excavated in 1882, the inscribed sepulchral monuments that erst bordered the Fosse way from Devonshire or the *Via Julia* from South Wales—such are right objects of curiosity, and Bath has yet other mementos of the Roman time.

The coming of St. Joseph of Arimathea to Glastonbury is a venerable myth which no well-disposed person cares to disturb, but its historical foundation is so painfully slight that, if we believe, it is because we wish to believe, not because there is a tittle of honest proof.

The earliest invasion of Britain by the Romans was

that conducted by Julius Cæsar in B.C. 55, but it was not formed into a province until A.D. 43, when Claudius Nero was Emperor. For nearly four centuries the country remained subject to Roman domination; then the pressure of the barbarians on the north-eastern frontiers of the Empire compelled the retirement of the eagles, and the civilized and Christian Britons had to defend their hearths against a multiplicity of foes—Picts, Scots, and English. It was in 449 that Hengest and Horsa, at the call of the distracted islanders, led their adventurous brethren to the conquest of Britain.

Of the conflicts which ensued and from time to time were renewed, until the Britons as a race were exterminated, absorbed, or banished to the recesses of Wales and Cornwall, the most generally famous are the wars wherein King Arthur waged twelve pitched battles against the pagan hordes, and, if report be true, assailed the unfortunate Romans as well.

> Amazement runs before the towering casque
> Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field,
> The Virgin sculptured on his Christian shield.

The date of Arthur is uncertain. If he lived at all, it was most likely in the fifth and sixth centuries of our era. Probably he did live. Doubtless his exploits have been magnified, his personality idealised by a rout of bards, poets, and romancers, but *an* Arthur—not necessarily the Arthur that we know—is quite within the limits of reasonable acceptance. The *Saxon Chronicle*, indeed, is silent regarding him, but contains the significant statement that Cerdic and his followers were thwarted in their attempts to take possession of Somerset. Now Camelot and Avalon, two important centres of Arthurian traditions, are commonly identified with Cadbury and Glastonbury, and thus it is a fair inference that the Britons, who presented this stern front, were captained by the great Keltic hero of the post-Roman period.

It will be news to many in Somerset that Mr. A. Bilderbeck, in a brochure marked by considerable ingenuity and learning, seeks to demolish Somerset's claims in this direction, tracing the whole fantasy to the "lies"—surely a harsh expression!—to the "lies" of William of Malmesbury, and transferring the scenes of Arthur's exploits to his beloved Lancashire. That he presents his case with real north country "grit" and ability is undeniable, but the arguments in favour of Somerset are at least as cogent; and as most of the details of Arthur's career are purely romantic and mediæval, it seems hardly worth while, for the sake of illusory gain, to quarrel with established traditions. Gain to the world, I mean; but even to the County Palatine it would be something like usurpation to appropriate honours accorded for so many centuries to Somerset. If any of Arthur's battles can be accounted real, it is that of Badon Hill, and Badon Hill has, with much probability, been identified with Badbury Rings in Dorset. The fact that Welsh historians of the thirteenth century confused this battle with the capture of Bath sixty years later is no evidence either one way or the other.

Bath was taken by Ceawlin in A.D. 577, and the region between the Avon and the Axe was annexed to the kingdom of Wessex. The following century witnessed a momentous change in the conversion of the Saxons to the Christian faith, the religion of their adversaries. Unfortunately, the Roman mission headed by St. Augustine proclaimed doctrines and observances differing from those of the ancient British Church, and, as in these matters the tendency of human nature is to accentuate distinctions rather than seize on vital points of union, the introduction of Christianity did not produce so beneficent an effect as might have been anticipated.

In the middle of the seventh century, Cenwealh established the bishopric of Winchester, and Cenwealh was the very King who completed the conquest of

Somerset by driving the Welsh from the Axe to the Parret. Freeman, indeed, maintains that the work was accomplished with the minimum of disturbance to Christian foundations like that at Glastonbury, but this has been reasonably doubted. Wars, especially wars of conquest, of necessity involve sweeping and violent changes; and it was perhaps not until the reign of King Ine (A.D. 688-726) that the land recovered from its wounds. Ine founded the bishopric of Sherborne, to which Somerset was assigned, and the first Bishop, Aldhelm, has been claimed as a native of the county. Ine fixed his residence at South Petherton, but is better remembered as fortifying Taunton, where his first great council was held. The place was afterwards seized by rebellious Athelings, but recaptured by his heroic queen, Ethelburga.

On Ine's abdication, Wessex fell temporarily under the sway of the Mercian King Ethelbald, whose defeat at Burford in 752, was largely due to the impetuous valour of a Somerset standard-bearer, who bore the Golden Dragon of Wessex into the thick of the fray.

In the following century, Egbert was not only King of Wessex, but lord paramount of England. His right to the pre-eminence was contested by the King of Mercia in a battle at Ellandune, in Wiltshire, but, with the support of a gallant alderman of Somerset, one Hun, he succeeded in vanquishing his enemies. Egbert died in 837. During his latter years he had to meet and defeat the intrusive Danes, with whom he fought several actions; and the conflict thus begun was continued by Ethelwulf and his son, Alfred, who was born in 849 at Wantage.

Somerset is, in a peculiar sense, the land of Alfred, since it was on the Isle of Athelney, at the confluence of the rivers Parret and Tone, that the greatest of English Kings raised a fort for holding his adversaries at bay until the moment arrived for leading his devoted subjects to the decisive victory of Edington. Some question exists as to whether this was the Somerset Edington or a village

of the same name in Wiltshire; probably, however, it was the former. In any case, the treaty of Wedmore, which spelt peace for several generations of West Saxons, was a Somerset frith; and most of the incidents which preceded it, including the well-known episode of the cowherd's wife and the cakes, took place within the limits of the county.

Alfred's son and successor, Edward the Elder, was the founder of the see of Wells, where a church had been built by King Ine, the founder or restorer of Glastonbury Abbey; and the abbot of this monastery was designated as the first Bishop of Wells. His name was Athelm, and very soon he appears to have become St. Athelm, since at the battle of Brunanburh, in which King Athelstan defeated the Danes, that monarch, having lost his sword, prayed to God and St. Athelm, and, in reward for his piety, found another in its sheath.

The most celebrated among Somerset churchmen is Dunstan, who occupied the archiepiscopal chair, and who, before that, was Abbot of Glastonbury, in or near which town he first saw the light in 925. The greatness of Dunstan is unquestioned, but, as is the case with Wolsey and Laud, his ecclesiastical policy, and even his personal character, by no means command universal approval. Dean Hook hardly knows what to make of him. Though he dubs him an "able statesman" and a "bold reformer," he finds him at the same time a "delirious dreamer," a "monomaniac," and a "ventriloquist." He was implacably severe to the married clergy, and terribly inhuman to violators of Church law, but he was a great administrator, and figures in private life as an Admirable Crichton.

In 976, Edgar, Dunstan's pupil, was crowned at Bath with imposing splendour, which seems to have left a lasting impression on the minds of the inhabitants. In the reign of Henry VIII., Leland could write: "They pray in all ceremonies for his soul, and at Whitsunday tide, at which

time folk say that there Edgar was crowned, there is a King elected at Bath every year in joyful remembrance of King Edgar and the privileges given to the town by him." This old custom served to excuse the infinite follies of the Pump Room, when to Beau Nash, as King of Bath, the habitués made humble obeisance.

Dunstan died in 988, the year in which Watchet was harried by the Danes. His successors, Ethelgar and Sigeric, were both Somerset men; and the latter counselled Ethelred the Unready to buy off the Vikings, who were becoming extremely troublesome. The futile and fatal character of such advice was clearly realised by Alphege, another Somerset Archbishop, who strenuously resisted the imposition of Danegelt, and paid the penalty for his patriotism with his life, being captured and assassinated by the pirates in 1002. The kingdom was now divided, Canute holding one part and Edmund Ironside the other. On the death of Edmund, Canute became King of the entire realm; and a touching incident of his reign is his visit to his "brother's" tomb at Glastonbury.

The connection between the last of the Saxon Kings and Somerset is particularly close. Harold was the son of Godwin, Earl of Wessex, and both were banished by Edward the Confessor for refusing to punish certain Englishmen who had revenged a Norman murder by slaying a score of that nation. Godwin passed to the Continent, and Harold to Ireland. On his return, the younger noble touched at Porlock with his flotilla of nine vessels, and appears to have requisitioned supplies. At any rate, a sanguinary quarrel took place between his followers and the men of the place, and when he left the haven he loaded his ships with cattle and other provisions, making no compensation. Furthermore, as Earl of Wessex, Harold had a controversy with Bishop Giso of Wells concerning the manors of Banwell and Congresbury,

so that with some West Country people he can hardly have been popular.

However, in 1066, on the death of Edward the Confessor, he was chosen by the council of the nation to succeed him, but, as all the world knows, the will of the nation was not destined to prevail. Before marching to the stricken field of Senlac, Harold knelt to pray in the Abbey of the Holy Cross at Waltham, which he had himself built for the reception of a black marble cross dug up at Montacute in Somerset, an estate of his standard-bearer, Tofig. It may be added that in the Bayeux tapestry Harold is depicted with the flag of the Golden Dragon waving over him—that flag which was the proud symbol of Wessex from the days of the glorious King Ine.

In 1068, Montacute was granted by the Conqueror to his brother Robert, and in the same year Harold's son and master of the horse, Eadworth, having swooped on the coast of Somerset with his two brethren, was slain in fight. The survivors re-embarked in their vessels, and are heard of no more. Meanwhile, there were disorders in Church as well as State; and Thurstan, a Norman who had supplanted Egelnoth as Abbot of Glastonbury, was the author of a bloody outrage against the Saxon monks, reluctant to part with the old familiar Gregorian tones. Norman soldiers were let loose upon them, and some of Thurstan's flock were butchered whilst clinging to the altar. Then, with the courage of despair, the churchmen turned upon their assailants, killed two of them, and ejected the remainder from the minster.

As will be remembered, Robert was the darling of the Norman nobles, and when the Conqueror was no more, William II. sought English help in order to maintain himself on the throne. In the fratricidal struggle, Bath was burnt by the insurgents, and Ilchester, which declared for the King, was beleaguered by Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, but he did not succeed

in taking it. The rebellion died down, and then William struck an important bargain with his physician and chaplain, John de Villula, selling him at much less than its value the bishopric of Wells. It happened, however, that the favourite preferred to make Bath his see, and covenanted with his sovereign to pay him five hundred marks, by means of which he acquired abbey and baths, rights of customs and tolls, and the profits accruing from the mint. This simoniacal transaction did not augur well for the diocese of the first Bishop of Bath and Wells, but John de Villula acquitted himself excellently, and to him was due the restoration of the abbey and the dwellings that had suffered, two years before his elevation, by the firing of the city.

In the civil war between Stephen and the Empress Matilda, Richmond Castle, adjoining East Harptree, was held by Sir William of that ilk for the lady against Stephen, who marched into Somerset with a view to capturing it. The garrison imprudently sallied out, and, before the soldiers could re-enter the fortress, Stephen's adherents, who were numerically superior, swarmed up, set fire to the gates, scaled the walls, and took possession of the stronghold. Another fort held in favour of Matilda was Dunster Castle, at that time the property of the Mohuns.

The murder of Thomas à Becket is attributable, in part, to Somerset men. Brito was of Sampford Brett, and Reginald Fitzurse resided at Williton. But that is not all. In 1210, Woodspring Priory, the ruins of which may yet be seen in the neighbourhood of Weston-super-Mare, was dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin and St. Thomas the Martyr. It was erected by a descendant of William de Tracy, one of the assassins, apparently in expiation of the crime, and a grand-daughter of Brito came forward as a benefactress. The seal of the Prior was a cup, and, curiously enough, in 1852 there was discovered at Kewstoke Church, only two miles from the

priory, a wooden cup, and on it were marks of human blood. This vessel has been thought to be the identical cup used to catch the blood that dripped from Becket's wounds; at any rate, the devotees may have been taught to regard it in that light.

William, Lord Briwere, who conveyed to Germany the ransom of Richard Cœur de Lion, founded also Bridgwater Castle and a Hospital of St. John for poor priests at Eastover, but nothing now remains of those buildings. The great architectural feat of the early thirteenth century was the rebuilding of Wells Cathedral by Bishop Jocelyn, whose brother, the more famous Hugh, reared that of Lincoln.

It is worthy of a passing note that in the reign of King John the ruler of the King's Navy was William de Wrotham, Archdeacon of Taunton, who, with the help of Geoffrey Luttrell, of Dunster Castle, superintended all the arrangements. Although a priest, he seems (unlike many of his civilian successors) to have been expert in the technique of naval construction.

Another Somerset worthy, who came rather later and figures in Fuller's pages, is Sir Matthew Gournay. He greatly distinguished himself in the French wars of Edward III. and the Black Prince; and it speaks volumes for his constitution that he not merely survived the hardships of those campaigns, but lived to the patriarchal age of ninety-six. His monument is still preserved at Stoke-sub-Ham, where he founded a castle and a church.

During the War of the Roses, Stoke Courcy (or Stogursey) Castle was taken and burnt by the brother-in-law of the King-maker, and the rebellion of Perkin Warbeck was productive of a number of stirring scenes in Somerset. At Taunton Castle a tax-gatherer who had taken refuge there was dragged forth and slaughtered; and at Wells, Lord Audley was induced to become the leader of the insurgent host. The royal commander, who beat him at Blackheath—Lord Daubeny—was also of

Somerset origin, and one of the ablest and most gallant generals of the age. Henry VII., in person, accompanied Daubeny on his march to the West, and was entertained for one night at the Deanery of Wells. On nearing Taunton, the Pretender was informed of the advance of the royal army, and, losing heart, fled to the New Forest.

The great minister of Henry VIII., Cardinal Wolsey, was, in the time of his youth and obscurity, a schoolmaster at Limington, and at the Lopen Play, a rustic *fête* in an adjacent village, entered so completely into the spirit of the occasion as to become gloriously drunk. The case was reported to the first Sir Amyas Poulett, of Hinton St. George, who corrected the parson by placing him in the stocks. Wolsey never forgot this affront, and, when in the plenitude of his power, summoned Sir Amyas before him, and made him a prisoner on parole in his own town house. After five years of this bondage, the gallant knight hit upon a happy device, which was to decorate his gateway with the Chancellor's coat of arms. Touched by this sign of penitence and submission, Wolsey relented. The grandson of Sir Amyas, who won his knighthood on the field, was appointed to keep guard over the beautiful but ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots during her captivity in England.

The acts for the suppression of monasteries brought about the downfall of a number of religious houses in Somerset, including Bruton Abbey, Cleeve Abbey, near Watchet, Hinton Abbey, near Bath, Muchelney Abbey, Stavordale Priory, near Charlton-Musgrove, and Barlynch Priory, near Dulverton. Bath Abbey escaped, but not as the home of any order of monks. Many of the monasteries succumbed without protest or penalty, but not so Glastonbury Abbey, one of the most famous conventual institutions in the country. There the Abbot, Richard Whiting, a man respected for his talents and of blameless life and conversation, was dragged on a hurdle to the Tor, and hanged, drawn, and quartered in the sight

of his own townspeople. The possessions of the abbey were confiscated; the abbey itself despoiled. By such detestable cruelty and vandalism, Henry VIII. and his minister Cromwell covered themselves with eternal infamy.

One of the manors belonging to the abbey—Mells—was purchased by Thomas Horner, the hero of the nursery rhyme, and the deed of conveyance is still retained by the head of the family, who is at present Mr. John F. F. Horner.

The King's School at Bruton, which was founded in 1549 by Richard Fitzjames, Bishop of London, Sir John Fitzjames, Lord Chief Justice of England, and John Edmondes, is an example of the Edwardian seminaries, which went some way to fill the void caused by the extinction of those centres of learning and refinement, the mediæval monasteries.

From Bruton, when invasion threatened in 1587, came the flattering report signed by a Government official: "I must needs say that Somersetshire is a county second to none for serviceable men and willing and dutiful minds"; and a few months before the appearance of the formidable Armada the same observer testified: "The truth is, it is a most gallant county for men, armour, and readiness. They may well guard her Majesty's person, if she had occasion to use them."

The first intimation of the approach of the "invincible" fleet reached the Council from Somerset in the form of a missive dated "Wellington, July 22nd, 1588." It was addressed by Sir John Popham to Lord Burleigh, and enclosed was a letter of a Bridgwater mariner, who declared that he had sighted the Spaniards off the coast of France, and they were making full sail for England. Popham inscribed the packet: "Haste, haste, I say—haste, post-haste, haste"; but he had no sort of fear: "The country I find everywhere ready and willing; our strength is so united that our enemies can never prevail against so gracious a Queen."

In Somerset the Great Civil War began with the expulsion of the Royalists from Wells, where the leaders quartered themselves in the Bishop's Palace. The Parliamentarians, headed by Sir Edward Hungerford and Sir John Horner, were in the immediate vicinity to the number of about sixteen thousand, and their guns were trained on the Palace. After the first few shots had been fired, the Cavaliers evacuated the city, but, notwithstanding this initial reverse, the Royalists for a time held the upper hand, and in the stubborn battle of Lansdown, near Bath, won a notable victory, which, however, cost them their chivalrous chief, Sir Bevill Granville.

In 1645, Robert Blake, Somerset's greatest son, appeared on the scene, and matters soon wore a different aspect. Nunney Castle fell, then Bridgwater, then Taunton, where Blake was opposed to a compatriot, Ralph, Lord Hopton. The struggle came to an end with the capitulation of Dunster Castle. There again Blake was in command of the Parliamentarians; but met with rather less than his usual success. Francis Wyndham, equally indomitable, would only surrender on condition that the garrison was allowed to march out with the honours of war.

Forty years later the county was destined to witness fresh horrors. In the summer of 1680 the Duke of Monmouth visited Somerset, and was everywhere received with enthusiasm. Recollections of this triumphal progress seem to have determined his subsequent action, and in 1685 he re-entered its borders, not as a peaceful guest, but at the head of an army, with which he proposed to dispute the succession to the throne. Landing at Lyme on June 11th, he reached Taunton on the 18th, when he was presented with flags by young maidens, and proclaimed king in the market place. From Taunton he proceeded to Bridgwater, and, on the invitation of the Mayor and Aldermen, took up his quarters at the Castle. Hardly a gentleman of note had joined him, and his force

consisted mainly of raw levies, poorly armed. Already failure stared him in the face.

Leaving Bridgwater, Monmouth led his men to Glastonbury, where some of them encamped in the grounds of the old abbey, through Wells to Shepton Mallet, and thence to Norton St. Philip. At the George Inn, which quaint hostel is yet standing, he informed his officers of his intention to attack Bristol, and the next day marched to Keynsham. A fire broke out in the docks during the night, but Monmouth did not avail himself of the confusion to deliver his promised assault; and on the following day a troop of Lifeguards, under General Oglethorpe, rode through and through Monmouth's ill-trained cavalry, which showed no ability whatever to resist them.

The Duke took this lesson to heart, and after a hasty visit to Bath, where the garrison declined his summons to surrender, made his way back to Norton St. Philip. Here he succeeded in repelling Feversham's advanced guard, but, without attempting any further stand, marched the next day to Frome, where he met with no support, and some of his principal officers deserted him. Monmouth himself had thoughts of escaping to the Continent, but just then the tidings reached him that the men of the marshes had risen, and were pouring into Bridgwater. Once more he directed his course to that town, and from the tower of the parish church turned his telescope on the royal troops encamped on Sedgmoor.

Misled by reports of indiscipline and drunkenness, Monmouth resolved to attack them; and on July 6th, before daybreak, his army was crossing the "rhines." The first volley from the King's forces sent his cavalry flying, but the infantry stood their ground well. However, lack of ammunition proved fatal, and Monmouth, seeing that the day was lost, rode from the field. Still the men fought on, but with the arrival of the royal artillery all was over. Lord Churchill (afterwards the great Duke of Marl-

borough) held an important command in the King's army, and to his dispositions the victory was largely due.

The triumph of legitimacy was disgraced by the horrible barbarities of "Kirke's Lambs" and the judicial murders of Judge Jeffreys; and on the Royalist side, the only redeeming features in the collapse of the "Dissenting rebellion" were the humanity of Bishop Ken, whose cathedral the rebels had profaned, and the noble refusal of Sir Francis Warre, of Hestercombe, Member of Parliament for Bridgwater, to extort a ransom for the maids of Taunton. When the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay in 1688, this brave gentleman was one of the first to give in his adhesion; and another Tory, who joined the avenger of blood, was Sir Edward Seymour, a kinsman of the Duke of Somerset. Only one small skirmish marked the advance of the invaders. This took place at Wincanton, where a party commanded by a lieutenant named Campbell, in quest of baggage horses, fell in with a body of Irish troops under Sarsfield. Being outnumbered by four to one, the detachment would doubtless have fared badly, but after the enemy had carried one hedge, the rumour spread through their ranks that the entire army of the Prince of Orange was before them. This led to their speedy withdrawal.

It is needless to extend this disjointed, yet more or less continuous, sketch of county history, which now merges into national chronology; but, by way of conclusion, it seems only fitting to indicate very briefly some additional claims of the Summer Land to our notice and reverence. The beauty and variety of its church towers cannot fail to impress the most casual beholder, whilst Wells Cathedral, though one of the smallest, is also one of the most perfect, of its order, especially when we take into account its accessories—the Chapter House, the Bishop's Palace, the Cloisters, etc. The Tudor manor-houses, such as Chew Court, Clevedon Court, and Montacute House, constitute another charming element, and it may be

doubted whether any county in England can outrival, or even rival, Somerset in the attractions of its domestic architecture.

The county is not specially strong in *belles lettres*. Samuel Daniel and Edward Dyer are poets of unquestioned excellence, and as such appeal to cultivated taste, but they do not belong to the highest circle of inspired bards, and to the mass of men their names are almost, if not quite, unknown. The same cannot be said of Chatterton, who was born in the Somerset quarter of Bristol, but the "marvellous boy" was essentially imitative, and owes his fame not so much to his talents as to his frauds and the tragedy of his end. Hartley Coleridge, a somewhat sickly genius, never attained nor deserved a tithe of his father's fame, but many of his poems, especially his sonnets, assure him a permanent place in classic English literature. Philosophy is more at home in Somerset, which can boast of Roger Bacon, John Locke, Ralph Cudworth, and Walter Bagehot; and in fiction it is represented by no less a writer than Henry Fielding. In the field of history the most prominent name is that of A. W. Kinglake. Neither art nor music is much indebted to Somerset, but travel and adventure have made several sons of Somerset illustrious. Tom Coryate is the prince of pedestrians, and Speke and Parry are among the heroes of discovery. Lastly, Admiral Blake and the Hoods have won imperishable laurels on the element which Britain traditionally holds in fee.

THE EDITOR.

"MENDIP'S SUNLESS CAVES"

By W. Tyte

AMONG the natural features of the county which are attractive alike to the scientist and the sightseer are the Mendip caves. Judging from the wide range of those known and explored, it would seem that the whole mass of hills is honeycombed with these subterranean excavations. They are common to the carboniferous limestone—a stratum which in this locality has an estimated thickness of from fifteen hundred to two thousand feet. The general geological formations attest, like those elsewhere, the stupendous changes which the earth's crust, in the lapse of countless ages, has undergone. Cosmic shocks which tilted up the solid rocks, upheavals creating a mountain range, with boreal cold that gave a glacial covering to all nature, a gradual sinking, followed by more genial conditions, and a fauna and flora suited to the climate for the time prevailing—are some of the facts revealed by the strata to the eye of the geologist.

In the course of these transmutations, the once-towering Mendip Alps, with perhaps an active volcano, have dwindled to the breezy hills, so easily accessible to all, and from which so much mineral wealth in the shape of lead and coal has been and is being extracted. Blackdown, the highest point, is not more than eleven hundred feet above sea-level. The enormous interval that has elapsed since the physical changes before mentioned may be inferred from the fact that the caverns, which anyone

in the present day can explore, were the abode of man or the den of animals, it may be a hundred thousand years ago. Their origin is assigned to the chemical action of the carbonic acid in rain water, and the mechanical friction of the sand and gravel set in motion by the water. Something is probably due to the dislocations caused in the interior of the hills by cataclysms or to whatever agency was due their alternate elevation and subsidence in primeval times. The cavities or chasms thus formed afforded easy scope for their enlargement by subaqueous motion, to which the marvellous beauty of some in stalactite and stalagmite can with certainty be attributed.

Sir Charles Lyell is, however, content with the slow, sure and silent operations of nature for an explanation. He suggests three stages of development: the first period, when the caves were licked out by the percolation of acidulated water; the second, when these hollows became the channels of engulfed streams; and the third, when the streams disappeared, and the caves were occupied by wild beasts and men, whose remains are found commingled upon the floors of the caverns. Thus the origin of Wookey Hole is traced to a stream at Priddy, which sinks into a swallet hole, its subterranean course being determined by the southerly dip of the rock. The cave is merely a subterranean extension of the ravine on the same line as far as the swallet hole, all three having been hollowed by the action of the stream and of carbonic acid in the water. The entrance to the cavern is an aperture under a low arched rock, which soon widens and attains a height of nearly fifty feet. Another narrow passage and a flight of rude steps lead to the grand cavern, nearly circular in form, forty yards in diameter, with a natural coved roof of solid rock, adorned with beautiful stalactites. Further progress was, until lately, impeded by a body of water extending underneath an arch of rock.

The cave was the first examined with any care in this country, Dr. John Beaumont having brought it under the

Interior of New Grotto, Wookey Hole.

PUBLIC

notice of the Royal Society in the year 1680. Early in the last century Dr. Buckland wrote a description of it, mentioning that he had found human remains and pottery in the further chamber. Later it was systematically searched by Mr. Boyd Dawkins, Mr. Ayshford Sanford, Mr. James Parker, the Rev. James Williamson, and others. In cutting a canal to convey the water of the river Axe to the paper mill close by, the mouth of what is known as the hyæna den was intersected in 1852. Seven years later, the bones and teeth of the woolly rhinoceros, reindeer, stag, Irish elk, mammoth, hyæna, cave bear, lion, wolf, fox, and horse were found in abundance. Subsequently, flint implements of rude workmanship were brought to light, also a chert arrow-head, bone arrow-heads, and splinters of flint, all of which were found in contact with some hyæna teeth. When the cave was cleared out, not only were similar animal remains extracted, but many burnt bones as well, showing where fires had been kindled and food cooked. It was then ascertained to be thirty feet wide by six feet high, and it extended forty feet inwards. Several bone beds of varying thickness were found in still deeper recesses, the number of bones being so large as to defy even an approximate estimate. The remains of the animals were so blended that they must have been living together at the same time, while the numerous jaws and teeth of hyæna, and the marks of those teeth on nearly every one of the specimens, show that they alone introduced them into this their lair. How such a number of animals could have lived in so limited an area as the Mendip Hills is explained by the supposition that the great moor now extending from Wells to the sea was a rich valley at a higher level than at present, joining the westward plains now submerged under the Bristol Channel.

Summarising his labours in the den, Mr. Boyd Dawkins says that the hyænas were its normal occupants, and thither they brought their prey. He adds:—

We can realise these animals pursuing elephants and rhinoceroses along the slopes of the Mendip till they scared them into the precipitous ravine, or watching until the strength of a disabled bear or lion ebbed away sufficiently to allow of its being overcome by their cowardly strength. Man appeared from time to time on the scene, a miserable savage, armed with bow and spear, unacquainted with metals, but defended from the cold by coats of skin. Sometimes he took possession of the den and drove out the hyænas, for it is impossible for both to have lived in the same cave at the same time. He kindled his fires at the entrance to cook his food and to keep away the wild animals; then he went away, and the hyænas came to their old abode. While all this was taking place there were floods from time to time, until eventually the cave was completely blocked up with their deposits.

A description published in 1757 calls Wookey Hole a triple grotto and the most celebrated subterranean cave in the West of England, one much resorted to by strangers from all parts of the earth. There is, we are told, a constant dripping of water, which contains a great quantity of lapidescent particles, and from such droppings arise several stony cones. These were cut away, and presented to Mr. Pope for his artificial grotto (at Twickenham), much to the disadvantage of the natural grotto. One shapeless mass of dripstone is known in local tradition as the "Witch of Wookey," turned into stone by the prayers of a Glastonbury monk—a story once devoutly believed by the faithful, and accepted as true by the ignorant.

Mr. H. E. Balch, one of the most untiring of explorers, has, with great difficulty, recently penetrated the cave beyond the point reached by any of his predecessors, and was rewarded by the discovery of several beautiful grottoes. One of these was almost filled with reed-like shafts of stalactites, supporting, it would seem, the roof above; as many as three hundred have been counted, all perfect and spotless as snow. By means of the magnesium light, Mr. Balch was enabled to take photographs of this and other of the more remarkable caves, from which lantern slides have been made. The pictures, when thrown on a screen, give a vivid impression of the

chambers and their contents. All the features are seen bathed, as it were, in the clearest moonlight, looking, indeed, as if Carrara marble had been used in their construction, though the idea vanishes at the thought that no human skill could create haunts and things of such loveliness. Exquisite as the views are in the white light of the lecture room, they are less entrancing than when seen under the rays of the magnesium illuminant. Then they are suffused with prismatic hues, the whole, from the variety and dèlicacy of the colouring, forming pictures which neither the brush of the artist nor the pen of the writer would adequately depict or describe.

The other principal caves are at Cheddar, Banwell, Uphill, East Harptree, and Burrington. Varying in size and shape, they nevertheless present the same general features, as might be expected from their common origin. Grand and rugged chambers, as at Wookey, some adorned with calcareous drapery in graceful folds, strange and beautiful shapes, brilliant incrustations, snow-white stalactites, are the sights that greet the visitor to these underground workshops of nature.

As the objective features of the caves are similar, so are they, in many respects, alike in the prehistoric remains they yield to the explorer. The examination of those of Banwell, Samford Hill, Bleadon, Goat's Hole, and Uphill, proved how rich they were in the fauna of the Mendip. As early as the middle of the eighteenth century they were known to contain bones of extinct animals. Some miners having opened an ochre pit south of the little village of Hutton, discovered a fissure in the limestone full of good ochre, which they followed to a depth of eight yards, until it led into a cavern, the floor of which was formed of ochre, with large quantities of white bones on the surface and scattered through the mass. Dr. Calcott described the bones as projecting from the sides, roof and floor of the excavations in such quantities as to resemble the contents of a charnel house. The Rev. D.

Williams and Mr. Beard, of Banwell, were engaged in exploring this and the other caves in the neighbourhood between 1821 and 1860. The quantity of remains obtained enabled them to supply liberally the museum of the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society at Taunton. All these caverns consist of chambers at various levels more or less connected with fissures, and from the perfect condition of the bones they must have been inaccessible to the bone-destroying hyæna, which doubtless was living close by. Their presence is due, according to Dr. Buckland, to water which brought them from the surface through swallet holes, the streams having, under changed physical conditions, ceased to flow. In the Uphill cave, the Rev. D. Williams found in the upper part of a fissure the remains of rhinoceros, bear, hyæna, horse, bison, and wild boar. The lions, judging from the quantity of bones revealed in the caves, must have been numerous. It was not a tiger, as supposed by some naturalists, but a true lion, differing in no respect (says Mr. Boyd Dawkins), except in its large size, from those now living in Asia and Africa.

Burrington cavern measures about a hundred feet in length and twelve in breadth. It is remarkable for the large number of human skeletons found on the floor when first entered in 1795. They were not lying side by side, but at length one after the other. From forty to fifty of the skeletons were perfect, and covered with stalagmite. On the floor were bones of horses, swine, and sheep, also some charcoal, and a flint arrow-head. The cave had probably been used as a burial-place in late Celtic times.

For grandeur and beauty, the cave known as Lamb's Lair carries off the palm. It was explored, as stated, in 1680 by Dr. Beaumont, who wrote a description of it in the *Philosophical Transactions*. He first heard of its existence from local miners, six of whom accompanied him in his expedition. He writes:—

Descending a perpendicular shaft of ten fathoms, they came to a small vaulted chamber, extending to the length of forty fathoms. The floor is covered with loose rocks, while the roof is a mass of beautiful colours from its calcareous incrustations and the stalactites pendent from it. In some parts the roof is five fathoms high; in others, so low as scarcely to permit a person to walk upright, and its width about three fathoms. About the middle of this cavern, on the east side, lies a narrow passage into another cavern, which runs between forty and fifty fathoms in length. At the end of the first cavern another vast chamber opens, the floor of which is twelve or more fathoms below this opening; its extent about sixty fathoms in circumference and twenty in height. On the west of this is another vault, whose roof is from eight to twelve fathoms in height, and runs in length about one hundred fathoms.

Messrs. Balch and E. A. Baker not long since visited Lamb's Lair among others better known. These experienced cave hunters declare the chief cave to be the grandest underground cavity in point of size, combined with magnificence of crystalline scenery, to be found in the country. Its tributary passages contain, among other unique sights, the famous bee-hive, the biggest boss of stalagmite ever discovered in Britain. It is significant of the condition of the interior of this high land that these explorers descended six hundred feet below the surface, passing through water tunnels, canyons, and perpendicular descents ninety feet sheer, a magnificent stalactite gallery, containing a marvellous stalagmite bridge, besides seeing crystalline grottoes of extreme beauty and roaring cascades which feed the river Axe. The pity is that so much of this fairy scenery is beyond the reach of the public; only the adventurous enthusiast would care to face the toil and danger necessary to secure an inspection of it.

Happily, the caverns at Cheddar, easily accessible as they have been made, afford ample opportunity to all to form a fair conception of the other marvels existing in the bowels of Mendip. Cox's cave, the oldest shown, is remarkable for the concentrated beauties of its contents. The graceful and strange shapes disclosed by the incrustations, the variety of the tints with which they are coloured, with stalactites above and stalagmites below,

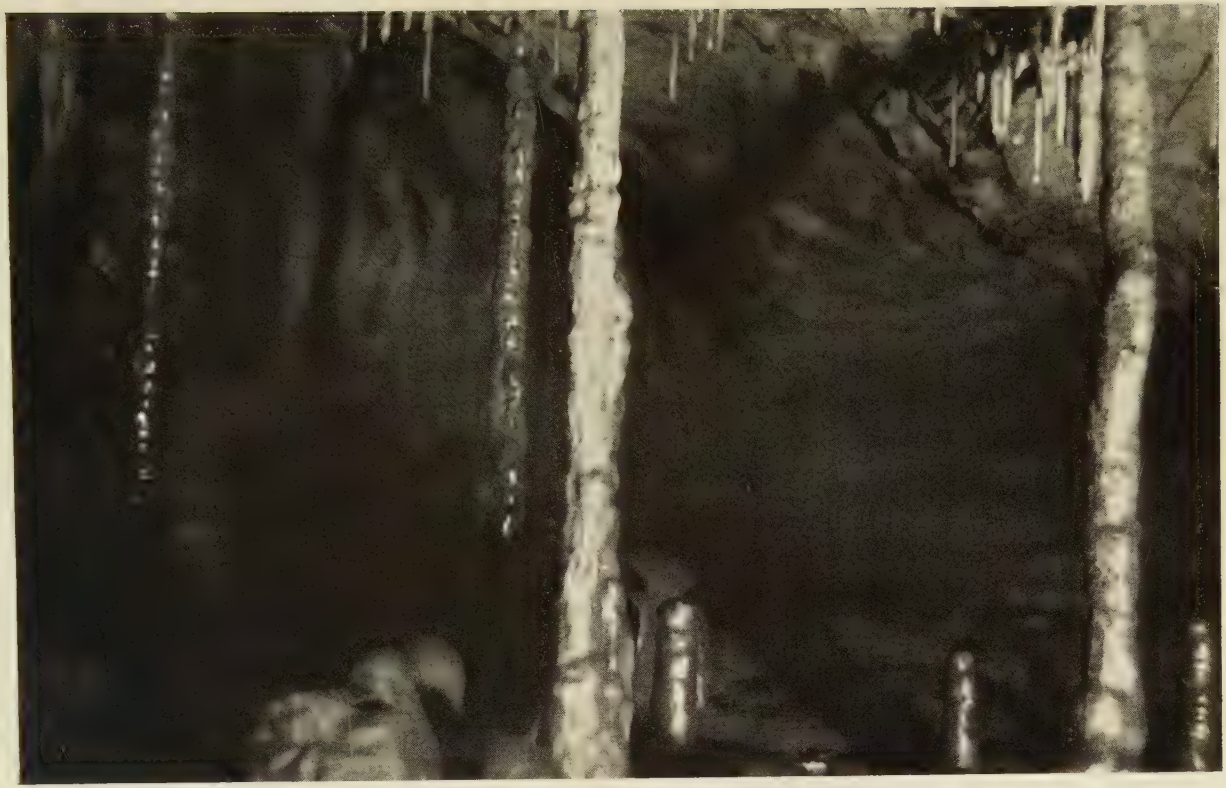
all form a weird and fascinating series of objects which arouse the admiration of visitors from all quarters of the globe. With Keats they may say:—

> Not Aladdin magian ever such a work began;
> Not the wizard of the Dee ever such a dream could see.

And whence came all this marvellous beauty? Simply from drops of water, holding in solution a grain of calcareous matter, each drop remaining pendent until the carbonic acid it contained had evaporated, and carbonate of lime was then deposited. Contrasting cause and effect, the slowness of the process demands an infinity of time for the production of the wonders beheld.

Goughs' caves are on a much more extended scale, the enterprising proprietors being constantly engaged in working their way through channels and chasms, and finding new chambers, each containing some fresh and beautiful feature to which any description would fail to do justice. In one place may be seen the Falls of Niagara, crystallised in miniature; in another, folds of delicate drapery, graceful festoons, stalactite and stalagmite, from pure white to rose pink, vaulted chambers with fantastic roofs, some sparkling, as if covered with gems when illuminated by the electric light. Mr. Cox, as well as Messrs. Gough, is continuing his researches, and there is no doubt, from the riven state of the rocks, that more discoveries of a like character will reward these exertions.

Both in the caves here and at Wookey Hole a number of Roman coins have been found. It is not to be inferred from this fact that the Romans chose them as dwelling-places. The explanation is that when the Saxons invaded and ravaged the country with fire and sword, the Romano-British inhabitants tried to escape destruction by taking refuge in caves and fastnesses, whither they brought their portable wealth. Gildas, speaking of the havoc wrought among his countrymen by the invaders, says that "the flame kindled in the east



Wookey Hole—Stalagmite Pillars.

raged over nearly all the land until it flared red over the western ocean." No wonder that remnants driven to despair left their houses and lands, and sought shelter in caves, mountains and forests, of which evidence is furnished by the coins mentioned.

Of far more importance ethnologically and historically is the discovery of the skeleton of a prehistoric man in one of Goughs' caverns. It was found in December, 1903; the blowing up of a rock with dynamite brought it to light, but shivered the osseous remains to fragments, thus making their collection and examination difficult. The skeleton was embedded originally in red, loamy cave earth, between two layers of stalagmite, each layer being about five feet in thickness. Implements of white flint were found near the body, with many splinters knocked off in the course of shaping the former. From the measurement of the bones, the man must have been not more than five feet four inches in height, with a square, prognathous jaw, containing large and strong teeth. The skull recedes sharply from projecting brows, and is very thick. These attributes are indicative of great strength of corporeal frame, which adapted their possessor to his environment, and enabled him fairly to maintain the struggle with the beasts of prey which contested his supremacy. What these were depends on whether he lived in the Paleolithic or Neolithic Age. Mr. James Geikie holds that paleolithic man, having occupied the English caves for untold ages, disappeared for ever, and with him many animals now either locally or wholly extinct. Between him and the neolithic man there are, in his opinion, no connecting links. The polished and more highly-finished tools and weapons of the latter are not improvements made in course of time on the old and rough implements first in use, but were brought here by a new race who had made some progress in civilisation. The theory thus advanced is somewhat weakened by the "find" at Cheddar. The flints there obtained are

deemed by Mr. H. St. George Gray "to point to the transitional period between the paleolithic and neolithic civilisations," though they may (he adds) "belong to early neolithic times"; in other words, there was not the blank between the two epochs which Professor Geikie maintained. In any case, the man found at Cheddar ranks for certainty among the oldest known inhabitants of Europe. He was (says the Dean of Wells, who saw some of the remains *in situ*) "a short, powerful, carniverous savage, fleeing, perhaps, from a foe, with all his stock-in-trade, to a fissure in the rock, there to die of starvation. In his skull were found human finger-bones. Were they his own?" What a field for speculation the question opens! A comparison of his skull with those dug up in the British village, and preserved in Glastonbury Museum, will show at once how great is the difference in their development, and the wide interval—almost too vast to grasp—that must have separated the races they represent.

In this, as in so many other instances, we have an illustration of the light thrown on prehistoric times by the explorations of our caves. The veil has been lifted from races that lived in Europe, in regard to whom tradition had not even whispered a hint. Their habits, mode of life, and the fauna and flora with which they were surrounded, as well as the coeval climatic changes, alike come into view. While the boundaries of knowledge have been thus widened, opinions on once generally-accepted beliefs have been modified or revolutionised, for just as recent discoveries in Assyria and Egypt have antedated by several thousand years the dawn of civilisation, so the discoveries in our caverns, particularly at Wookey and Cheddar, have given an eonal aspect to the antiquity of man.

W. TYTE.

THE GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE

By H. St. George Gray

GLASTONBURY, already of wide-world fame on account of its ecclesiastical associations and its magnificent examples of mediæval architecture, has of late years had its fame considerably enhanced by the discovery and excavation of the Lake or Marsh Village in its immediate vicinity. The interest in this ancient site has attracted antiquaries to Glastonbury from all parts of the world, and they have evinced the greatest interest in this peculiar lacustrine habitation, marking and exemplifying as it does the cultural epoch of Great Britain known as the Prehistoric Iron Age, covering the greater part of the Late-Celtic Period, concerning which comparatively little had been known previously.

It has been written that "the history of Glastonbury is the history of its abbey." This is, of course, to a very large extent true, but we are now able to qualify that remark by pointing out that the material for reconstructing an earlier history of Glastonbury is concealed, or has been until recently, in the moorland levels which to a large extent surround the Isle of Avalon.

When we speak of the Lake Village as being of prehistoric origin, it is not meant that it belonged to a period that can only be vaguely estimated or measured by geological time, but to a comparatively short period of time immediately preceding, and to a lesser extent overlapping, the commencement of our present era—an age

known archæologically as the Prehistoric Iron Age. In one sense of the term, the civilized world is still in the Iron Age, while in some remote regions that stage of culture has not been reached.

It is seen, then, that the existence of the Lake Village is synchronous with the fourth and last stage of the prehistoric ages. The "drift," or Palæolithic Age, is practically the earliest, when man simply chipped his implements into form without subsequently grinding them. A decided difference characterises the second phase of culture—the Neolithic, or polished stone, Period. The beautiful workmanship of the implements themselves, and their skilful chipping and polishing, all evince a clearly-defined advance in the civilisation of the human race. The third stage of human progress is marked by the introduction of bronze—an alloy which averages ninety per cent. of copper and ten of tin and impurities. In this Bronze Age, cutting tools were still made in stone as well as in bronze, but iron, if known (it was probably in a meteoric state), was not "worked" in Britain. Approximately, our Bronze Age commenced about B.C. 1700, and this is the earliest *date* that is safe in the present state of our knowledge of British archæology. For Britain, as well as the Continent, it is now possible to date relics as being of the Early, Middle, or Late Bronze Age. The Middle Bronze Period embraces a time when cremation was first introduced into Britain, about B.C. 1000—a date which, in classical lands, approximates to the close of the Bronze Period.

The word "Late-Celtic" was the invention of the late Sir Wollaston Franks, and was intended to signify the Age of Iron immediately preceding the Roman Period, the Early-Celtic period being synonymous with the Bronze Age. The word Celt (or Kelt) was first used to describe a people who inhabited the Alpine district near the source of the Danube about the eighth century B.C. The name Gaul was applied at a later time to the hordes of barbarian

warriors who took Rome in B.C. 396, and later sacked Delphi.

The first Celtic conquerors of Britain were the Goidels of the Bronze Age, and they were followed by the Brythonic Celts, who came to Britain later, viz., in the Early Iron Age and about B.C. 350. The incoming of the big Goidels made the small Iberians "hewers of wood and drawers of water," and in time either absorbed them or themselves became absorbed.

Continental antiquaries divide their Celtic remains, which are very numerous, into two primary divisions, viz., the Halstatt Period, B.C. 800-400, and the La Tène Period, between B.C. 400 and the conquest of Cæsar. The first of these takes its name from the celebrated cemetery of Halstatt, near Salzburg, Austria, where many remarkable discoveries have been made, the most important marking the transition from the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age in this part of Europe. The La Tène period (B.C. 400 to Cæsar's time) is so named after the Gaulish *oppidum* of that name on the Lake of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. I mention this because some of the Glastonbury relics (especially the fibulæ) are of La Tène type, which correspond with objects of the Marnian Period of France.

The Celtic art of the Early Iron Age in Britain did not come to a dead stop as soon as the Romans occupied Southern Britain. On the contrary, the overpowering influence of Roman taste and customs did not check the development of true British art. British art of the Roman Period is generally known as "Romano-British"—sometimes as "Kelto-Roman"—and extended down to A.D. 450. This was followed by Christian Celtic art, post-Roman and pre-Norman, A.D. 450-1050. In speaking of Celtic remains, therefore, it is absolutely necessary to give a secondary distinction.

We do not with any certainty attribute the origin of the Lake Village to the Brythons or to a people of mixed

Iberic, Goidelic, and Brythonic blood, it being more probable that the Belgæ (a partly Teutonic people), who appeared in Britain about B.C. 250, and who reintroduced cremation through north-eastern France, where they had superseded purer Gaulish tribes, are responsible for the formation of the Lake Village. Dr. R. Munro says that there is a "tradition that a colony of Belgæ formerly occupied Glastonbury." Cæsar records that the Belgæ had settled in Britain before his own time, and it is a historical fact that as late as the second century A.D. they occupied what are now the counties of Somerset, Wilts., and Hants. Taking all circumstances into account, including the finding of the greater portion of a tin coin of the first half of the first century A.D., and the fact that five feet of peat accumulated in some parts of the Village during the occupation, we are absolutely safe in saying that the existence of the Lake Village extended from about B.C. 250 to A.D. 50, although I am inclined to extend these dates a little in both directions.

Discoveries of prehistoric lacustrine abodes in England have been of rare occurrence. Small finds of this nature have been made in the meres of Norfolk and Suffolk in two places; also in two parts of the Fenland district; in the Llangorse Lake, near Brecon; in London and in Berks.; and at some five stations in the Holderness, Yorkshire. Of far greater importance than any of these is the discovery made in March, 1892, by Mr. Arthur Bulleid, F.S.A., of the Lake Village, situated a mile and a quarter north of Glastonbury, but in the parish of Meare, from which village it is two and a half miles distant. Although the site is about fourteen miles from the coast, it is less than 18 feet above sea level. The river Brue passes between high banks at no great distance away, and there is good reason to believe that the small natural watercourse which bounds the village on the east side represents the ancient course of the Brue, or a large tributary of it. As late as 1540, a lake five miles round

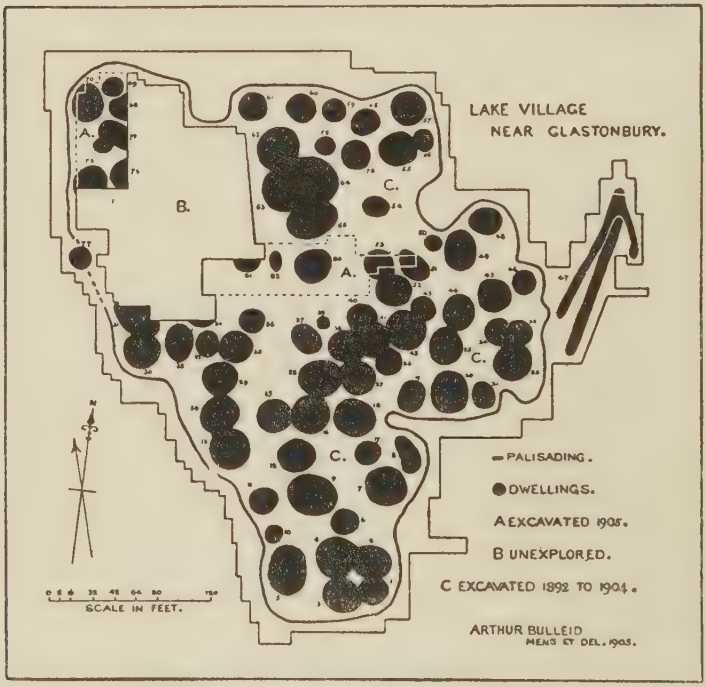
came very near the village, and in times more remote it was probably of much larger extent. This area still retains the name of Meare Pool. From these facts we may conclude that the moorlands of central Somerset surrounding Glastonbury were covered by large tracts of shallow water suitable for the construction of lake dwellings.

Although the Lake Village is unique in some respects, yet it is closely related to the lake dwellings of Switzerland, the crannogs of Scotland and Ireland, and the terramares of Italy. The builders of the very numerous lake settlements of Switzerland followed a plan which is still practised on the sea-shore of New Guinea. A series of long poles pointed at one end were gradually worked into the bed of the lake; on these a wooden platform was erected, and on this platform log-houses. In the case of the Scotch and Irish crannogs—dwellings used up to comparatively recent times—instead of rearing a platform upon piles, an artificial island was constructed by heaping brushwood, stones, and other materials together on the bottom of the lake, and driving piles into its floor, so as to prevent the foundation being washed away. Not infrequently these crannogs were built upon natural subaqueous mounds. A terramare was a moated enclosure with pile dwellings inside it; but the piles supporting the huts were driven into dry ground, and not into the bed of a lake or morass.

Now, the selected area at Glastonbury was originally surrounded by the shallow water of a mere, in which leaves and rushes had accumulated for ages. Trees, such as alder and willow, were felled on the spot, the roots of some being allowed to remain in the position in which they grew, whilst other trees were no doubt brought to the site; these, together with an enormous quantity of brushwood and some stones, formed the chief constituents of the substructure.

The whole area, about three and a half acres, was

enclosed and strengthened by a border palisading, consisting of large piles, sometimes twelve feet in length, kept together by coarse hurdle-work. Many of these piles were found much displaced, but on the whole they formed a fairly perfect and continuous, though irregular, outline. The irregularity of the village border was

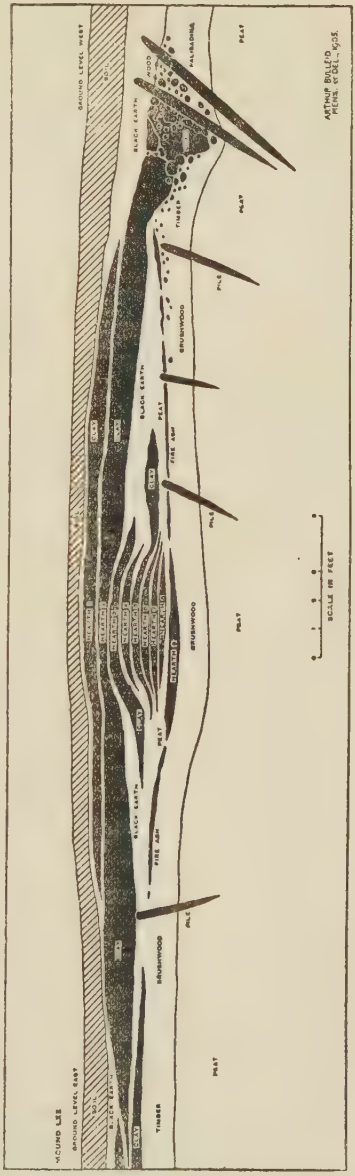


PLAN OF LAKE VILLAGE.

probably due to extensions of the habitable area into the surrounding swamp from time to time. On the inner side of the palisading, trunks of trees and large pieces of timber are found placed side by side parallel to the margin, and sometimes reaching twelve feet inwards. Underneath the upper timbers more timber is found, alternating with layers of clay, brushwood, patches of

stone, peat, rushes, and bracken (total average depth, five feet).

The substructure having been prepared in the manner already stated, the constructors proceeded to introduce clay, depositing it as floors for their dwellings, ranging from 18 to 35 feet in diameter. The clay is found at the margin as a thin layer, but it gradually thickens towards the centre of the hut, occasionally to the extent of five feet. Around these clay floors the hut walls were constructed of upright posts, placed about one foot apart, the interspaces being filled with wattle and daub. This is proved not only by the quantity of baked clay bearing wattle and timber marks, but also by the stumps of the actual wall posts *in situ*. From large pieces of wattle-work found outside some of the huts, we estimate that the vertical walls were six feet high. We know



SECTIONAL DIAGRAM OF MOUND 70, SHOWING THE FORMATION OF THE FLOORS OF THE DWELLING.

that the huts had central posts of oak, as the stumps of several have been found in position, and these, with the top of the hut walls, probably formed the chief supports for the roofs thatched with reed.

The entrance to the huts has been clearly traced in many instances, a few slabs of lias stone forming the door-step, with a piece of timber as the threshold.

The clay floor having been laid down, a hearth averaging four feet in diameter was built up approximately in the centre. Generally, they have been found to consist of clay or a few slabs of stone embedded in the clay floor; less frequently of rubbly stone or gravel.

On account of the softness of the underlying peat and the loss of support from the decay of the timber and brushwood substructure, and the weight of the superincumbent clay, these floors were constantly sinking, especially in the middle, where the weight was greatest. This necessitated the renewal of the floors by fresh layers of clay. In some huts four or five distinct layers occur, and as many as nine separate floors have been met with. A new floor did not always necessitate the formation of a new hearth also; but, on the other hand, a hearth was often renewed independently of making a new floor; and in 1905 we examined a hut which, although it had only two floors, had no less than nine superimposed hearths.

Having described the typical dwelling from base to top, and having stated that the clay floors are always found to be thickest in the middle, it is obvious that at the present time slight mounds would exist indicating the precise position of the ancient huts. These mounds average only one foot in height, whilst other dwelling sites could not be discerned at all above the field level. The sites of about sixty-five dwellings were counted at the commencement of the excavations in 1892, but the actual number has now reached eighty-two.

A curious ridgeway outside the east border of the village was found to be composed of clay covered with

a layer of rubbly lias stone. It commenced within a few feet of the village border, and extended in a northerly direction for a hundred feet; it then changed its course, turning towards the south-east for forty feet. This causeway evidently led to a landing place.

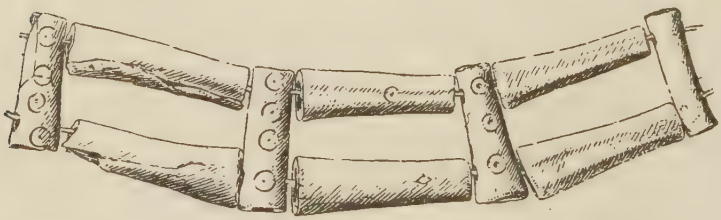
Without considering pottery, the relics found number some four thousand, and their interest is considerable, throwing light, as they do, on the everyday life of the inhabitants. Probably their best and most artistic work still remains hidden, and will as long as the cemetery of the lake-dwellers is unknown. The relics are found for the most part on the various floors of the huts, where they were lost and ofttimes broken; sometimes perfect objects became trampled into the soft clay. In some huts the relics were found in a calcined condition, and from this and other reasons there is no doubt that these huts were burnt down.

The objects of utility and ornament have been found to consist of the following materials:—Bone, horn or antler, wood, shale, jet, amber; bronze, lead, tin, iron, antimony; glass, baked clay, flint and other stone.

Amongst the most attractive objects found are the weaving combs, which number close upon a hundred, and which, among other things, serve to afford proof of the industry of the women. They were used for pushing home the weft or woof in weaving. Somewhat similar combs of iron are used at the present day in the carpet factory at Wilton, Salisbury, and elsewhere. These Lake Village combs are most interesting, and they not only assume a variety of forms, but the elaborate decoration on some of them greatly enhances their ethnological value. Even more numerous are the spindle-whorls with which the women twisted their thread. Many shuttle-spools of bone have been found, and numbers of baked clay weights to keep the warp tight on the loom whilst the weft was being worked in with bone shuttles. The framework of a loom has also been discovered. Flax, in

all probability, was the material which was woven, but we have no positive evidence of this. Many bone needles have been found; bronze needles are rarer.

And whilst we are considering the women, let us turn to personal ornament, not that I wish to infer that the men were not fond of decoration also; indeed, judging from the many spiral bronze rings found and their great variety in size, we may safely assume that the rings were shared by men, women, and children. By far the most interesting objects for personal decoration are the bronze brooches, or fibulæ, of safety-pin design. The majority of these are made from one piece of wire, the nose, catch-plate, bow, spiral spring, and pin being absolutely con-



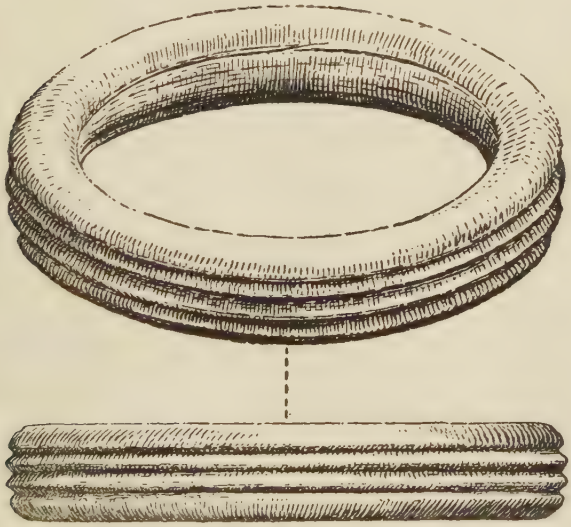
PIECES OF PERFORATED BONE BELIEVED TO BE PART OF A NECKLACE.

tinuous. One does not get this characteristic in Roman times, when the pin formed a distinct part. The Lake Village affords instances of more than one stage of development in the history of the brooch, and similar specimens have been discovered, but infrequently, in widely-scattered British and Continental localities, the majority being found at La Tène in Switzerland. A few penannular or split ring brooches have also been found.

That the lake villagers wore beads as necklaces, and possibly as amulets, we have proof, for not a season's excavation takes place without finding a bead or two of glass or amber. Of the latter we have four only; and one ring of polished jet, excellently preserved. Glass beads of various colours are met with more frequently.

The most remarkable amulet is a roundel fashioned out of human skull-bone. A few bronze bracelets, and fragments of others, have been found, but the most highly-finished armlet is that of Kimmeridge shale, which is admirably turned, and quite perfect. Bronze dress fasteners are amongst the rarer objects found.

Before leaving personal decoration, it must be stated that in many of the huts a fine red colouring matter has been discovered, which suggests the cosmetic known as



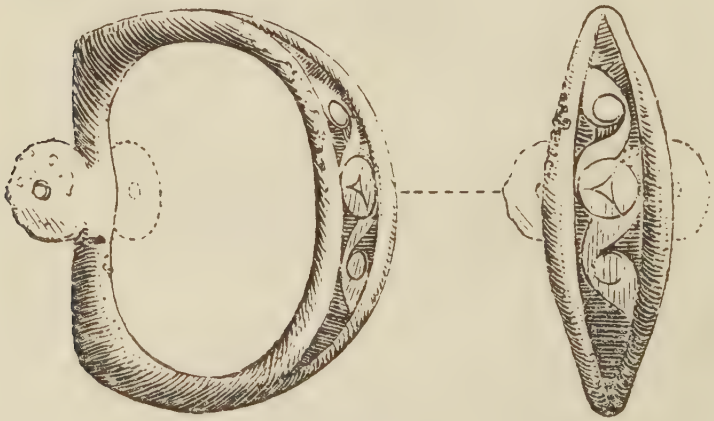
KIMMERIDGE SHALE ARMLET.

rouge. A bronze mirror and the ornamental handle of another have been discovered, but I am not aware that they were found in association with rouge! Bronze tweezers are occasionally found.

None of the relics have attracted so much public attention as the bronze bowl found in 1893, its workmanship being exceptionally fine. Although the design has been regarded as being of ancient Venetian origin, it is quite probable that the bowl was manufactured in the

village. This statement is strongly supported by the fact that several dozens of rivet heads, precisely similar to those on the bowl, and much thin sheet bronze, have been found in various huts.

That metallurgy was carried on in the village we are positive, from the fact that many crucibles have been found and the remains of *tuyères*, *i.e.*, conical tubes through which air is conducted into a furnace by means of bellows. Iron files have also been discovered. Pieces of glass slag have been found, implying that glass-working was also practised.



BRONZE HANDLE OR LOOP.

The presence of iron saws, bill-hooks, knives, gouges, axes, and adzes, prove that wood was worked very considerably, and the respective marks of these implements are often seen on the boards, piles, mortised beams, and tubs found in the village. The discovery of iron snaffle-bits signifies that the people rode or drove horses. Cheek-pieces of horses' bits, made of antler, and similar to hundreds found in the Swiss lake dwellings, have been uncovered in considerable quantities, and "terrets," or rings attached to horse-collars for passing the reins

through, and other ornamental horse-trappings, are not infrequent finds.

Of the iron from Glastonbury, none surpasses in general interest objects which have recently been proved by Mr. Reginald Smith, of the British Museum, to be currency bars, as a means of barter. They have a superficial resemblance to swords in the process of manufacture, and have been found in various parts of the south of England, often in hoards or bundles, in one case no less than three hundred and ninety-four being uncovered in one entrenchment. These objects have been found to be of three denominations, viz., once, twice, and four times the unit (allowing something for rust and corrosion). The two from Glastonbury are of the first two denominations; and the absence of British coins, with one exception, can be to some extent explained by the presence of these currency bars. They are mentioned by Cæsar, but until now they had not been identified. Iron used as currency is common in West Africa and other parts of the world.

Evidence of games is not wanting, for small smooth pebbles, or *calculi*, are plentiful; but of greater interest still are the dice and dice-box of bone. A spur of a fighting cock renders it probable that the villagers were given to cock-fighting, like the ancient Gauls.

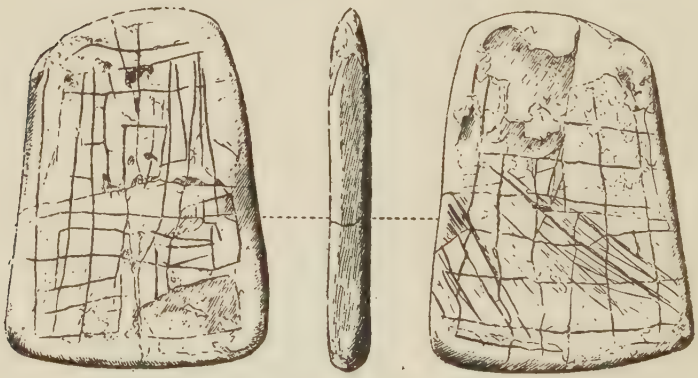
Cereals and other vegetable products have been found plentifully, wheat and peas being quite abundant. A substance in the form of a flattened bun, now almost black, is believed to be bread, but it has not yet been microscopically examined. Querns, for grinding corn, are not rare finds.

Of human remains, many have been found, including a skull with sword cuts. Most of the skulls with long heads have been found outside the palisading of the village, but, on the other hand, fragmentary human remains and teeth are frequently discovered on the floors of the huts, including the shaft of an arm bone gnawed by a

dog. There is a slight suspicion of infanticide, judging from the very numerous remains of infants found in the huts, etc. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that the ordinary death-rate, especially of children, must have been great in a habitation that was often partially flooded.

Animal remains are exceedingly plentiful, and include small ox (*bos longifrons*), the horse, pig, sheep, goat, dog, stag, roe deer, beaver, otter, and about thirty species of aquatic and other birds.

Several remarkable wooden objects have been



SLAB OF STONE WITH INCISED CHEQUERED PATTERN.

recovered, and amongst other things a ladder seven feet long, tubs and portions of staves of tubs ornamented with finely-incised designs, a large bowl cut from the solid and gracefully decorated, the nave of a large wheel, spokes of other wheels, and finely-turned handles for saws and other iron tools. The dug-out canoe, eighteen feet long, was found well outside the bounds of the village, but doubtless had connection with it.

Thousands of fragments of pottery have been found and recorded, and about a hundred complete vessels from one to thirteen inches in height. Some of the forms are

remarkably graceful, and the elaborate incised decoration, in which curvilinear forms, dot-and-circle patterns, and zig-zags predominate, is sufficient to form a separate study in itself. Indeed, the earthenware, taken as a whole, throws a fresh light on a very remarkable class of Late-Celtic ceramics, of which but very little had been previously known. Much of the pottery, wood, and shale is lathe-turned.

In conclusion, if I have not succeeded in condensing the results of this large archæological undertaking satisfactorily into the compass of this short article—short as compared with the diversity and scope of the subject—I trust that I have at least convinced my readers that Somerset has produced the most famous example of domestic civilisation of the Prehistoric Iron Age in England, if not in the world.

H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

BRITISH AND ROMAN BATH

By W. Tyte

PLACES and races have often some legend, quaint or marvellous, to explain and glorify their origin. A fabulous beginning gives, it may be supposed, an aristocratic character to a city or people, and is cherished with greater tenacity when evil days befal its believers, the experience of "what is" forming a melancholy contrast to the accepted brightness of a vague past. Nor can it be doubted that the tradition, illusory as it may be, keeps alive the hope of better things to come in the down-trodden and oppressed. To the historian, also, it may have value, since tradition is generally an accretion of error formed upon some nucleus of truth. From this source slight help may be obtained in dealing with Caer Baden and its environs in early times, for just as Rome has its myth of Romulus and Remus and their wolf nurse, so Bath has its myth of Prince Bladud and his pigs. Nevertheless, its antiquity is not great, seeing that it is evidently of post-Saxon origin.

The two facts on which it appears to be built are these: in ancient days, the hot springs which welled up in the valley percolated through the earth, converting the flat ground between their source and the river into a bog or morass. What more natural than that the pigs, of which the natives owned many, should leave the woods into which they were driven to feed on the acorns there to be found in abundance, and wallow in the warm ooze Nature had provided close at hand? That some were

Roman Bath.

cured of cutaneous maladies is conceivable; also that the swineherds found the mud baths grateful and comforting, as well as efficacious in some of the ills from which even these hardy natives of the hills and woods were not exempt, is highly probable. The recollection of advantages of this peculiar nature doubtless lingered on during and after the period when the Romans came and intercepted the springs, built over them magnificent baths, and thus drained the old morass.

Then the ruthless and destroying Saxons appeared on the scene; the stately structures were overturned, and for more than a century desolation brooded over the ruins of Aquæ Solis. Above the silt and stones which, brought down from the hills around, partially covered the remains, sculptured capitals and pediments could be seen. The knowledge how they came there was imperfectly known; to the semi-barbarians who dwelt in the land, to attribute them to magic was an easy way out of the difficulty. The worker of the marvel was found in a great necromancer, Bladud, the son of King Lud Hudibras. He, being afflicted with leprosy, was banished from his father's court, became a wanderer, and at length a swineherd in these parts. Some of the hogs under his care taking the disease from him, plunged into a steaming bog, and were cured. Bladud followed their example with the like blessed result. In gratitude for his recovery, he, after presenting himself at court, returned here, and built a splendid city with baths on a corresponding scale of magnificence. The story, which first made its appearance in the writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth, is probably of monkish invention, based on the ancient morass and the later remains of Roman architecture, as already indicated.

Despite the absurdity of the narrative, the people of Bath for centuries accepted it as true. To doubt it was to be disloyal and to rob the city of a mark of distinction which reflected lustre on its birth. When the first Pump Room was opened, in 1706, the proceedings included the

singing of an ode, the following being the first two stanzas:—

Great Bladud, born a Sov'reign Prince,
But from the Court was banish'd thence,
His dire disease to shun;
The Muses do his fame record
That when the Bath his health restor'd,
Great Bladud did return.

That glorious Prince of royal race,
The founder of this happy place
Where beauty holds her reign;
To Bladud's mem'ry let us join,
And crown the glass from springs divine,
His glory to maintain!

It is curious to find Wood, the celebrated architect, trying to bolster up the belief in this myth. He prepared a certificate for signature to this effect:—

We whose names are hereunder written, natives of the city of Bath, having perused the above Tradition, do think it very truly faithfully related, and that there is but one circumstance omitted in the whole story, which is the grateful acknowledgment Bladud made to his master, for it is said, the King richly arrayed him, made him a Knight, and gave him an estate to support all his dignity—as witness our hands this first day of November, 1741.

Assuming a real Bladud came into these parts four or five centuries B.C., what would have been their aspect? A thickly-wooded country in possession of the Belgæ, a powerful branch of the Celtic family, who had crossed over from the Continent, and driven into the interior an older people of the same stock, but of more primitive habits. In fact, the whole of the southern and western districts was held by them. Their dwellings were huts placed in clearings in the woods, though many doubtless resided permanently in the camps on the hill tops. These were of large extent, and fortified with a rampart of stones, an escarpment below, and sometimes with an external and internal vallum. Always occupied though they were, their primary use was to afford shelter

in times of danger to all the tribe and their belongings —wives, children, flocks, and herds. From the number of these fastnesses, they must have been a very prominent feature, striking the eye of our hypothetical Bladud. He would see one on Hampton Down, others on Solsbury, Charmey Down, Lansdown, and Odd Down. On all the highlands throughout the west and south similar refuges existed, and communication by signals linked them together when peril threatened. The country, it may be inferred, must have been fairly well inhabited to require all these places of retreat when the necessity arose for resorting thereto. It is computed that Worle camp alone could hold from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand persons, with space in the enclosure outside to accommodate all the live stock.

That the Belgic Britons were expert hunters is conclusively shown by the abundance of game in the woods, which were the haunts of the red deer, the elk, wolf, and wild boar. Moreover, the British dogs were widely celebrated for their superior breed, and so strong and fierce were they that the Gauls are said to have used them in war. The tree-shaded Avon, winding through the valley, with a deeper and stronger current than now, and the tide ebbing and flowing not far below Bath, gave them plenty of scope for fishing, and, unobstructed as it was by weirs, they could voyage up and down in their coracles with ease until the Severn was reached. Portions of the land around the camps must have been under cultivation, as wheat and barley have been found within the enclosures; Diodorus likewise credits them with practising agriculture. A further proof of their comparative civilisation is the extent to which they smelted iron ore, and forged it into weapons and tools, also the lead mining operations carried on by them on Mendip. Long before the time of Cæsar, lead was transported to the ports on the south coast, whence the trading vessels of the Belgic Gauls took their freights of the produce of

mines in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall to convey to the Continent. Professor Ansted, an eminent mineralogist, calculated that in the bed of a stream that flowed in former ages on Mendip Hills there was a deposit of lead-producing débris of old mines and lead washings of ancient miners equal to six hundred thousand tons. Though this opinion was expressed some sixty or seventy years ago, it is only recently that a syndicate or company has been formed to turn the mass to profitable account.

In the making of pottery, both for use and ornament, the Belgic Britons had also acquired considerable skill. The old camp on Lansdown already mentioned was discovered a short time ago through the moles turning up fragments of black ware and one or two coins. These relics having come under the notice of Mr. T. S. Bush, he obtained permission from the lord of the manor (the Rev. T. W. Blathwayt) to explore the ground. The quantity of pieces of pottery thrown up from the trenches made has been quite embarrassing to the explorers. Only samples (including Samian specimens) have been preserved and placed in the Bath Literary and Scientific Institution, where also have been deposited two stone coffins, containing a male and female skeleton, and some of the Roman coins found, many of the reign of Constantine, though a small one struck at Treves is said to be unique, the cases at the British Museum containing no such example.

It is evident from the depth of the black earth covering the ground, contrasting as it does with the ordinary brown soil, that the camp must have been occupied for several centuries—long before the arrival of the Romans, during their stay, and probably after their departure. As the explorations are to be continued, many other finds will doubtless reward the antiquaries interested in the work, and add to the meagre historical knowledge possessed of the people and their relations with the conquerors.

As to their religion, it was what is known as Druidic,

which was more firmly established in Britain even than in Gaul. This district is supposed to have been one of the principal centres of the cult, owing to the numerous oak trees to be found in the woods around. The Druids, says Pliny, deem nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grows, if only it be an oak. They are credited with offering human sacrifices to secure the favour or appease the anger of the gods worshipped. If so, the Bath valleys must have witnessed some horrible scenes when paganism of this type was in the ascendant.

It was the mineral wealth of Britain, previously noticed, that tempted the cupidity of the Romans. Julius Cæsar's invasion was only partially successful. It was the expedition of the Emperor Claudius, A.D. 43, that placed the island at the feet of Rome. The invaders promptly realised the importance of the hot springs running to waste, and probably from the above year they commenced collecting them, and utilising them for baths, both for luxury and health. With equal sagacity, they found the stone intercalated in the strata of the surrounding hills, and quarried it for their building operations. The principal part was obtained from the southern eminence (now known as Odd Down). It was near at hand, and as an old trackway descended straight into the valley, it was made into a good road, down which the stone gravitated without much effort to the site of the baths. The transport of this material was further facilitated by the construction, it is believed, of a bridge over the Avon. When the work of erecting the magnificent baths, a portion of the ruins of which has been brought to light of late years, was actually begun, or how it was carried on, history has left no record. Though the place was, it is conjectured, visited by different Roman emperors, and its splendour was well known both by observation and report, no writer of the period, either native or foreign, has left any account for the information of posterity. Even its name is mentioned only by two

contemporary authors: in the fourteenth Iter of Antoninus it is called *Aquæ Solis;* and Solinus, who wrote in the third century, indicates Bath, it is supposed, when he speaks of the *Calidi Fontes* in Britain, and speaks of its baths and bathing rooms, and of the presiding deity being Minerva. These are the solitary facts that the most diligent research has gleaned from ancient writings at present extant. We know nothing of Bath during its opulence, or its decay after the withdrawal of the Romans, except what may be gathered from surviving monuments. Surprise at the paucity of this literary evidence is not lessened when it is remembered that the glories of *Aquæ Solis* were not confined to the area enclosing the springs. The slopes beyond, offering lovely sites, were adorned, we can imagine, with villas occupied by the wealthy and cultured Roman society. Tesselated pavements connected with such residences have been found within the city; others at Wellow, Newton St. Loe, and Box; while remains of villas, as they are called, have been exhumed at Combe Down, Warleigh, Langridge, North Stoke, etc. A country settled and secure, and of lettered ease, is suggested by these scattered abodes, and from them might have been expected, if not formal treatises, epistolary correspondence giving an impress of the times. If such ever were penned, it has entirely perished, through the savage antipathy evinced by the Anglo-Saxons to all the concomitants of civilization. The little knowledge gained has been derived from the ruins preserved, particularly of the public buildings of the Roman city, which the enlightened policy pursued by the Bath Corporation of late times has brought to light.

The city assumed the form of a pentagon, or five-sided figure. It was surrounded by a massive wall, with lofty gateways, and towers rising from the different angles. In the centre stood the Baths, the great temple of Minerva, the Basilica or courthouse, the Forum, with its statues, and other public buildings. It is easy to

conceive what a captivating aspect *Aquæ Solis* must have presented, with its homesteads on the north, and its ornamental grounds adjoining the Bath on the south, a meadow or lawn connecting these with the willow-fringed Avon. That it was a city of pleasure and a sanatorium, rather than a military centre, is highly probable. A street crossed the city from north to south, dividing the Baths into two establishments, a hot spring being in the centre of each. According to the late Major Davis, who was mainly instrumental in uncovering the remains, the buildings round the springs were of two distinct periods, the earlier being enlarged later to meet a growing demand and a more luxurious taste. Three separate springs supplied the establishments as now, the heat of which varies only three degrees, while the mineral properties are the same. The highest temperature is 120°. The Baths were erected within an excavated area, to admit of the springs filling them by gravitation, and their construction attests that they were planned by an architect who was a thorough master of his art. The reservoir or well of the king's bath spring was surrounded by a wall of massive stones, fifty feet long and forty feet broad, the whole being cased with lead three-quarters of an inch thick, obtained from the Mendip mines. In all, five baths of notable size and some smaller ones have been excavated, leaving, it is thought, others still buried on the western side. Each of the baths was in a separate hall; the largest (that covering the rectangular bath) was 110 feet long and 68 feet broad. Precaution was taken to prevent leakage by covering the floor with a layer of lead, while the ambulatories were covered with tesseræ of varied design. A complete system of Turkish baths, as they are now called, was a feature of each department. The floors rested on pilæ, and flues were carried up as a coating to the walls to furnish additional heat. Attached were the various apartments which the Romans used before entering the hot baths or sudatories, such as the

frigidarium, where the bathers undressed themselves, which was not warmed; the *tepidarium*, which was moderately heated; and the *eleothesium*, which was a small room, containing oils, ointments, and perfumes. These rooms had a communication with each other, and some of them were beautifully tesselated. Culverts made with heavy blocks of stone conveyed the overflow water to the Avon, and they are still in use for the same purpose. It is calculated that the Baths covered an area averaging not less than 300 feet to 350 feet in breadth, and 900 feet in length.

A place presenting so much in harmony with the taste and requirements of the Romans must have been constantly resorted to by them, the splendid roads converging upon it making access to it easy. How far the natives, when trained in the habits of the conquerors, were allowed to participate in the pleasures there offered, it is impossible to say. No doubt they were at first treated as slaves, and were the hewers of wood and drawers of water, both in the city, the camp, and the villa. Numbers were drafted into the Roman legions, not a few to perish in the distant wars of the Empire; some, too, may have figured in the gladiatorial arena—"butchered to make a Roman holiday." Still, constant intercourse and intermarriage may have in time led to a partial fusion of the two races, and thus made the lot of the inferior less degrading, even if equality was not recognised. Under these improved conditions, the Britic-Romans may have had some share in the luxuries of the bathing establishment. What Rome possessed was, it is believed, not denied to the natives, who were ambitious to distinguish themselves in the Roman arts and sciences, though many of the Belgæ preferred to live in their old camps, and to follow as far as possible their old mode of life.

With peace assured within, and no dread of foes from without, the inhabitants of all classes—ruling, professional, and commercial—pursued the even tenour of their

ROMAN BATH.

way. The festivals as they recurred—the Lupercalia, the Feralia, and the Quinquatria, with others—were high days and holidays, special honour being paid to the Quinquatria, as it was dedicated to Minerva, the tutelary deity of Aquæ. Then we may be sure the Governor, Curiales, Consuls, and the Quæstors, the priests and priestesses, the men in flowing robes, the perfumed ladies in gay gauze and silk garments, the soldiers in their armour, the trade guilds with their insignia, gathered to take part in the solemnities of the day and the pastimes with which it was accompanied. Doubtless the Baths, public buildings, and streets imparted, by their temporary adornment, additional zest to the enjoyment of the revellers. With the stately edifices and spacious Forum which then existed, and the tower-capped walls encircling all, it may well be questioned whether Bath throughout its modern history ever presented a spectacle more imposing than these festive scenes furnished.

But over this prosperity and security the cloud of misfortune was gathering. With the withdrawal of the Roman legions early in the fifth century it began, no bigger than a man's hand. Yet the dread of what it portended could not fail to be realised. The Britons left alone, and appealing to Rome in vain for a continuance of military protection, set up several petty governments, which only led to anarchy, amidst which the heroic figure of King Arthur dimly looms. Through this time of unrest, the Baths, at least in part, were still used, but it is evident from the worn condition of the stones, as seen now, that repairs were neglected, and the fate of the rest of the public buildings was no better. Dilapidations were making rapid progress when the terrible Saxons made their appearance. For a century and a half they had been extending their conquests in the south-western parts of Britain, but in 577 they gained a signal victory at Dyrham over the three British Kings, Commail, Condidan, and Farismail, and took three cities,

BACKNEY PUBLIC

Gloucester, Cirencester, and Akeman (Aquæ). The combatants who were unable to secure safety in flight were put to the sword, their homes destroyed, and Akeman was left by them a mass of ruins. Such is the generally received account, but it is quite possible that the victors, having sacked the place, abandoned it; and in this deserted condition the ravages of time, combined with previous neglect, would suffice to explain its later shattered aspect. A poem preserved in a book at Exeter is believed to describe the city at that period. It was translated from the Saxon by the late Professor Earle. "Stupendous" (it tells) "is the wall of stone fatally shattered. The strongholds are bursten, the work of giants decaying, the roofs are fallen, the towers are tottering, dwellings unroofed and mouldering." Works of art are described as exposed to the sky; a wide pool of water, hot without fire, and once-frequented baths, the pavements crushed with the ruin and broken up in heaps, are also mentioned. Shunned for long years, as if haunted by ghouls and goblins, the chaotic mass was given over to any beast or bird that chose to take possession of it. When at length a revival came, it was from this source, as from a quarry, that stone was obtained for the buildings of the city that in course of time rose again upon the site.

W. TYTE.

"OLD MOTHER SHIPTON'S TOMB"

By the late W. George and the Editor

> And men still grope t' anticipate
> The cabinet designs of fate;
> Apply to wizards to foresee
> What shall and what shall never be.
>
> Butler's *Hudibras*, Part ii., Canto 3.

THE fact of Mother Shipton's existence and the story of her life rest wholly upon Yorkshire tradition. According to that tradition, the place of her birth was on the banks of the river Nidd, opposite to the frowning towers of Knaresborough Castle, and a short distance from St. Robert's Cave—a spot famous for mediæval legends and modern horrors. She first saw the light a few years after the accession of Henry VII. Her baptismal name was Agatha, and her father's name was Sonthiel, which was supposed to be of foreign origin, and to indicate that he had been one of the Breton followers of the new King who had settled in Yorkshire. With all these romantic accessories Agatha Sonthiel was content, in due time, to become the wife of Toby Shipton, an honest artisan, who lived at the village of that name a few miles from the city of York; and under the familiar name of Mother Shipton she acquired her prophetic fame. Her death is said to have happened in 1561, and her burial-place to be Clifton Churchyard, near York, where, it is also said, a stone was placed to her memory, on which was this epitaph:—

Here lies she who never ly'd,
Whose skill so often has been try'd.
Her prophesies shall still survive
And ever keep her name alive.

Though during her lifetime she was looked upon as a witch, and is generally supposed to have sold her soul to the devil for the power of foretelling future events, she yet escaped the witch's fate, and died peaceably in her bed at an extreme old age.

Fourscore years after her death, a quarto pamphlet, consisting of four leaves, was issued in London, entitled "The Prophecies of Mother Shipton, in the reign of Henry VIII., foretelling the death of Cardinal Wolsey," etc. "Printed for Richard Lownds, at his shop adjoining Ludgate, 1641."

This is the earliest printed account of her extraordinary predictions that is recorded by bibliographers. It was probably by this publication that the fame of Mother Shipton as a witch or prophetess became known beyond the borders of her native county. It may be conjectured that the imagination of one of the followers of the Court of Charles I. (who made many progresses through Yorkshire whilst prosecuting his designs against Scotland) had been captivated by the prophecies of the Yorkshire witch, then rife in that county, and, on his return to London, concocted the pamphlet then committed to the press. It soon became popular, and other editions quickly followed. In one edition, issued in 1642, Mother Shipton is strangely associated with Ignatius Loyola; and another of the same date has "strange news from Oundle, in Northamptonshire," added, which gives it the character of a news pamphlet. In 1643 a further edition was issued, and others soon followed. In 1648 "Twelve Strange Prophecies" were added to those of Mother Shipton. This edition is illustrated with a woodcut, in which Cardinal Wolsey is represented standing at the top of Cawood Castle, looking towards York, which Mother Shipton predicted he would

see, but "never come at it." The same woodcut has a grotesque figure of the prophetess with her hooked nose, her staff in one hand, and the other raised with extended finger pointing to the Cardinal. "Thirteen Strange Prophecies besides Mother Shipton's" appeared the same year, 1648; and in 1663 "Mother Shipton's Prophecies, with three and xx. more, all most terrible and wonderful." So the prophecies increased with the demand for them.

Mother Shipton's portrait had appeared in some of these early editions of her prophecies, but no account of the personal history of the Yorkshire witch had yet been printed. The person to whom the world is indebted for carrying out this happy thought is the notorious Richard Head, the author of "The English Rogue," "The Canting Academy," "The Art of Wheedling," and other works of a loose description. This literary worthy not only invented Mother Shipton's biography, but manufactured many of her prophecies, which, in 1667, he issued from the London press under the title of "The Life and Death of Mother Shipton; being not only a true account of her strange birth, but also all her prophecies now newly collected," etc., etc.; all of which, Head tells us, had been "strangely preserved amongst other writings belonging to an old monastery in Yorkshire, and now published for the information of posterity."

Of course, Head does not give the name of the "old monastery in Yorkshire" where the MSS. were preserved, but the fact is that the whole of the book is pure fiction. Head has rejected the traditional prophecies contained in the early tracts, which, from their local colour, might be supposed to have some foundation in truth; and has substituted for them a long series of predictions which he ascribes to Mother Shipton, but it is obvious are his own ingenious contrivances to answer ingenious interpretations. Nevertheless, this production has been accepted by the popular taste as the authentic history of the Yorkshire witch, and has been frequently reprinted in every variety

of form and sold as a chap-book in all parts of the kingdom down to our own time.

Head was drowned near the Isle of Wight in 1687, but the manufacture of Shiptonian after-the-fact prophecies was carried on by others. For example, let us take the prophecy most frequently quoted, which commences:—

> Carriages without horses shall go,
> And accidents fill the world with woe.
> Around the world thoughts shall fly,
> In the twinkling of an eye.
> Through the hills men shall ride,
> And no horse be at his side.
> Iron in the water shall float,
> As easily as a wooden boat.

And ends with the couplet:—

> The world to an end shall come
> In eighteen hundred and eighty-one.

A correspondent sent the above to *Notes and Queries*, and asked where it was first published. In reply, it was said that it was not to be found in the 1797 edition of *Mother Shipton*. The Rev. Walter W. Skeat showed that it could not be ancient, and asked: "Is there anything to prove that it is older than the present century?" In the next volume of the same periodical the whole mystery was cleared up by the following paragraph: "MOTHER SHIPTON.—Mr. Charles Hindley, of Brighton, in a letter to us, has made a clean breast of having fabricated the prophecy quoted at page 450 of our last volume, with some ten others included in his reprint of a chap-book version, published in 1862."

Notwithstanding these proofs of fabrication, the prophecies of Mother Shipton are still believed in many of the rural districts of England. In cottages and servants' halls her reputation is great; and she still rules, the most popular of British prophets, among all the uneducated and half-educated portions of the community. The notorious Ham-hill delusion created a large demand in Somersetshire

for "Mother Shipton's Prophecies." For a penny chap-book edition shown us eightpence had been given. The first proof of a tyro compositor would not contain as many errors as this pamphlet. In some occult manner its value appeared to be increased by its mixed type, inverted letters, and vile spelling; for on these being pointed out to the owner of this precious "well of English undefiled," he remarked: "Now, who but the great Mother Shipton *would* have had their prophecies printed in that way? Explain me that—if you can."

A stone in Somersetshire and another in Yorkshire, in no way connected with Mother Shipton, have been called after her name. Should the reader wish to know something of her monument, which Richard Head pretended was erected to her memory at Clifton, near York; or of her "real skull," exhibited in Fleet Street, in 1792; or of the wax figure of Mother Shipton, exhibited in the same street; or to learn how she, to the delight of juvenile visitors, used to put out her leg and kick the shin of anyone who approached near her; or to see more specimens of modern fabrications of Shiptonian prophecies, he is referred to the fourth series of *Notes and Queries*, from which repository of antiquarian lore this notice of Mother Shipton has been chiefly gleaned.[1]

The *West Somerset Free Press* of May 17th, 1879, contained an account of a visit to "the spot known to the rustics of the neighbourhood as Mother Shipton's grave," and situated at Blackdown Wood, near Orchard Wyndham (one of the seats of the late Earl of Egremont). The writer describes a remarkable stone there as follows:—"A tall slab, about seven feet high, three and a half wide, and proportionately thick, faced in front, but in its naturally rough state behind, stands, firmly fixed in the ground, facing the Orchard Wyndham mansion, and

1 Dr. Mackay's *Popular Delusions*, Lowndes' *Bibliographer's Manual*, W. C. Hazlitt's *Handbook of Popular Literature* and his *Collection of Notes*, 1876, have also been made use of.

about one hundred yards within the wood. On the front is a rude representation of the head and shoulders of a woman, whether man or woman it would puzzle one to tell, surmounted by a few deeply-cut lines, somewhat resembling rays, and underneath in four lines of old-fashioned capital letters, the inscription:—

'DM, IVLMARTIM, AV LX AN, XII III DXXII,'

and a large oval representation of what appears from its markings to be a wreath. Not being archæologists enough to determine what can be its meaning, and prudently recollecting the results of Mr. Pickwick's amateur antiquarian discoveries, we are bound, after many conjectures, perhaps more witty than wise, to give up that too, though there seems to be every appearance of genuine antiquity about the stone, and the inscription bears a striking resemblance to those on Roman slabs and altars dug up at Bath and elsewhere, and has about as little to do with Mother Shipton as with Mother Hubbard or any other nursery celebrity."

This description of an interesting relic, apparently of Roman Britain, induced a search for fuller information respecting it. Nothing relating to either the stone or the inscription was found in the Rev. John Collinson's *History of Somerset*, 1791; in the older history by the Rev. Thomas Cox, 1726; or in the useful compendium of the history of the county by Samuel Tymms, F.S.A., published in 1832. In the introduction of the Rev. W. Phelps's *History and Antiquities of Somersetshire* (1836) is the following account of the object:—

Chapter vi. Stone of a memorial to a young Roman lady, discovered in a wood near Orchard Wyndham.

A Roman stone of memorial, in good preservation, has been found in a wood at Orchard Wyndham, in the parish of St. Decuman's, near Watchet, and involves some curious circumstances as to how it came there. It consists of an upright stone, seven feet high, two feet wide, and one foot thick, sculptured with the head and bust of a female figure, and has an inscription cut in large legible characters with a wreath underneath.

Camden, in his *Britannia*, published in 1637, p. 772, gives the same inscription as found on a stone at Ellenborough, in Cumberland; which Horsley, in his *Britannia Romana*, copies, as does Lysons in his *Magna Britannia*. There is only this slight difference in Horsley's representation, that it has no wreath below; but in all other respects it corresponds. How came it, then, into Somerset? It may have been brought from Ellenborough by some of the Wyndham family, who had property in that neighbourhood. The stone seems to have been cut and used as a clavey-piece, or support for the opening of a fire-place, and rescued from that situation by some antiquary, who probably placed it in its present position; but no tradition is handed down respecting it. The common people call it Mother Shipton's Tomb.

The Rev. W. Phelps was Vicar of Bicknoller, about three miles from Orchard Wyndham, and doubtless described the stone from personal inspection.

Many of the Roman altars and inscribed stones found at Ellenborough, Dr. Stukeley informs us in his *Itinerary* published in 1776 (p. 49), had in his time been given away. R. Gough, F.R.S., in his edition of the *Britannia*, 1789, mentions the names of some of those to whom they had been given. One had been presented to the Bishop of Man, and was then in the episcopal library in the Isle of Man; to Mr. Kirkby, of Ashleck, Lancashire, a fine altar had been given; others had found their way to Drumburgh Castle, and to Sir J. Lowther's, Whitehaven. Pinkerton saw the "Julia Martima" stone at Ellenborough Hall in 1774; and Nicholson and Burn describe it in their *History of Westmoreland and Cumberland* in 1777. In Gough's *Camden*, 1789, is an engraving of it.

The inscription on the Ellenborough stone, as given by Horsley, reads:—

DM
IVLMARTIM
A VIX. AN
XII. IIĪ D.XXII

It may be thus expanded: "Diis Manibus Julia Martima vixit annos duodecim menses tres dies viginta duos."

The inscription on the so-called Mother Shipton's

Tomb, as copied by the visitor before mentioned, is virtually the same, and signifies in English: "To the gods of the shades. Julia Martima lived twelve years, three months, and twenty-two days." The words are evidently commemorative of the death of a young Roman lady who "went to the shades" probably fifteen hundred years ago, and have no more connection with Old Mother Shipton, the troublesome prophetess, than with Old Mother Leakey, of Minehead, the formidable whistler.

It will be asked: Is the Orchard Wyndham stone the one that was formerly at Ellenborough, and described by Camden and other antiquaries? Judging from the foregoing account, it would appear at least possible. If we suppose the stone now in Blackdown Wood, Orchard Wyndham, to be one of those which had been given away but the gift of which had not been recorded, how came it so far from its original site? That may be easily accounted for.

The Roman station where it was found is near the modern town of Maryport, in the parish of Cross Canonby, and about a mile from Ellenborough, which would not be far from the borders of the great barony of Copeland, now called Egremont, from which the Earls of that name derived their title. Indeed, the manor of Birkby, near Ellenborough, belonged at the time Lysons wrote (1816) to the Earls of Egremont.

Sir Charles Wyndham, of Orchard Wyndham, fourth baronet, succeeded to the titles of Earl of Egremont and Baron Cockermouth by the death, in 1751, of his uncle Algernon, Duke of Somerset (Sir Charles's mother was Catherine, second daughter of Charles, the "proud" Duke of Somerset). Earl Charles died August 21st, 1763, and was succeeded by his son, George O'Brien Wyndham, as third Earl of Egremont, who died in 1837, aged 86. His lordship, who was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and also of the Society of Antiquaries, was widely known for his patronage of the fine arts. His collection of pictures

and of ancient and modern statuary at his magnificent seat at Petworth are well known. Amongst the hundreds who followed his remains through the town of Petworth as they were carried to their last resting-place were J. M. Turner, the painter, then in the zenith of his power, though not of his fame; C. R. Leslie, R.A.; and the Carews, the sculptors.

If the stone now at Orchard Wyndham happened to be the one formerly at Ellenborough, as mentioned by Camden, who so likely to have had it removed there as this nobleman, who enjoyed his title from 1763 to 1837? The modern port of Maryport is close to Ellenborough, and near to Orchard Wyndham is the ancient port of Watchet. And one of the inscribed Roman stones found at Cockermouth Castle, Cumberland, about 1803, is stated by Lysons to have been in the possession of this Earl of Egremont—a fact of some importance in the present enquiry, as it indicates his lordship's antiquarian tastes.

Comparison of "Mother Shipton's Tomb" with engravings of the stone at Ellenborough described by Camden and others leads to the unhesitating conclusion that it is impossible for these monuments to be one and the same. In form, in size, in sculpture, and in the style of its letters, the Orchard Wyndham stone differs widely from the Ellenborough specimen; and the following woodcuts of the two stones will help to render those differences clear.

D. and S. Lysons, in their *History of Cumberland*, 1816, say that Horsley's sketches of the figures in bas-relief "are mere scrawls," but they bear witness to the "great accuracy" with which he had copied the substance of the inscriptions on the Roman stones found in that county. Horsley's engraving is, therefore, copied in preference to any other. It was first published in his *Britannia Romana*, 1732, Cumberland, fig. lxxi.

The following woodcut of the Orchard Wyndham stone is from a small drawing, made to scale, by Mr. C. H.

Samson, architect, of Taunton; its accuracy may, therefore, be relied on.

On comparing these illustrations, the differences in the form, sculpture and style of the letters of the two stones are at once apparent: The interesting inscription in the engraving after Horsley is plain and easily comprehended. In the Orchard Wyndham stone the inscription is corrupt and incomprehensible. Whence this confusion arose can be easily traced.

THE ELLENBOROUGH STONE.

THE ORCHARD WYNDHAM STONE.

Alexander Gordon published an engraving of the Ellenborough stone, in 1726, in his *Itinerarium Septentrionale.*

Horsley says that Gordon has not given "the true cut or dimensions of the letters" in his copies of the Latin inscriptions; and D. and S. Lysons, who speak so highly of Horsley's accuracy, add that even the inscriptions themselves in Gordon's book "are by no means accurate copies." An example of the truthfulness of these remarks

will be seen from his copy of the inscription on the Ellenborough stone:—

DM
IVLMARTIM
AV LX AA/
XII III DXXII.

Here, then, is the source from which was obtained the corrupt version of the inscription on the stone at Orchard Wyndham. That which was plain in the original Gordon has made obscure, and the sculptor of the Orchard Wyndham inscription has faithfully reproduced Gordon's errors. Hence arose all this mystification about it.

Besides these obvious differences there are others which may as well be noted:—

1.—The Ellenborough stone did not exceed five feet in height.—Hutchinson's *Cumberland*, ii., 284.	1.—The Orchard Wyndham stone is seven feet high, above the ground.
2.—The head gabled, as may be seen by the copy of Horsley's engraving.	2.—The head of the stone does not appear to have been gabled.
3.—The bust of the female was in bas-relief.	3.—The bust of the figure is *incised*.
4.—The inscription on it so illegible in 1599, that even Camden erred in copying two of the numerals.	4.—The letters of the inscription are clean cut and very legible.
5.—No wreath under the inscription.	5.—Under it a wreath, as in woodcut.
6.—There was a fracture through the whole width of the stone, as may be seen by Hutchinson's engraving (*Cumberland*, ii., plate 1).	6.—The stone is not fractured, but sound throughout.

Whence did the Orchard Wyndham sculptor obtain his pattern for the wreath, which Mr. Phelps notes as the only "slight difference" from Horsley's engraving? Apparently from the same book as the inscription. On plate xiii. of Gordon's *Itinerarium Septentrionale* is an engraving of a remarkable Roman altar found at Barrhill

Fort, Scotland, which has a *corona triumphalis* on it. The modern sculptor, finding he had two feet more space to fill than his Roman brother, looked through his "pattern-book," alighted on this "wreath," and filled the vacant space with the incongruous ornament. In this way, one assumes, was the so-called "stone of memorial to a young Roman lady" decorated with a triumphal crown that was assigned only to a successful Roman general.

The original stone marked the place where were deposited the ashes of a Roman lady who died probably in the fourth century, and is of much historical interest; the Orchard Wyndham copy is placed as an ornament on a rising ground in a capability-Brown-like hanging wood, and is a modern antique with a muddled inscription that mystifies historians and leads compilers of hand-books astray.

Mr. Phelps writes that "it appears to have been cut and used as a *clavey-piece* or support for the opening of a fire-place." Mr. Samson, after an independent examination, is of the same opinion. Similar *clavey-pieces* were not uncommon in old mansions of the neighbourhood. In one of the rooms in the Edward III. gateway, Dunster Castle, there is now one of similar dimensions. Leland, who visited Mr. John Wyndham "at Orchard about the year 1542," informs us that "Sidenham the 2 buildid most part or almost al the good buildings of Orcharde." But Collinson remarks that "some parts of the mansion seem so ancient, as it may well be believed they were built by the primitive owners of the name of Orchard," which family resided here during the reigns of the first three Edwards. Is it improbable to suppose that a *clavey-piece* of the time of Edward III. similar to that in Dunster Castle might be "found" very near Blackdown Wood?

How came the site of this stone to be called "Mother Shipton's Grave"? A place not far from it, half-a-dozen different people assure us, was her birthplace. Seven cities

of Greece claim Homer for a native. Allan Cunningham, "Murray," and a "Wiltshire Rector" mention three places, in as many different counties, as the birthplace of the eminent painter, Sir Thomas Lawrence, of Bristol. It is difficult to understand how any person, be he poet or painter, could have had more than one. But here is a still greater puzzle than the foregoing—for troublesome Mother Shipton, the croaking prophetess, not only has two birthplaces, but two graves as well: one in the north, and the other in the south of England! She has also two epitaphs —one in Latin and the other in English; the Latin one describing her as a Roman damsel, and the English one informing us that "Here lies one who never *lied*." So the Latin one is not more applicable than the English.

For reasons that need not be stated, it was thought possible that the original stone might, after all, never have been removed from the old site. A letter of enquiry, addressed to the owner of Netherhall (formerly Ellenborough Hall), Cumberland, elicited a prompt, full, and courteous reply, from which the following important information is copied:—

"The 'Maryport' Roman station [is] known in books as the 'Ellenborough' station. . . . The Julia Martima tablet described by Camden, Horsley, and many others, is *neither lost nor given away*, but stands at present in the covered portico at Netherhall, among many other Roman stones and altars found in or near Maryport station.

"It has evidently been exposed to the weather at some period since Horsley sketched it, and is less distinct, especially as regards the female head, than it appears in his representation."

The Orchard Wyndham stone being now proved beyond the shadow of a doubt to be spurious, it is to be hoped that no historian of Somersetshire will again honour it by giving it a place among the "Roman antiquities" of that county.

The Editor.

GLASTONBURY ABBEY

By the Rev. Canon Scott Holmes, M.A.

THE attraction of Glastonbury is unique. Its history carries us back into the realm of legend, and much was said about it for which no evidence can be produced, and on which, of course, we can give no opinion. With an almost entire absence of documentary evidence, yet men in the thirteenth and fourteenth century knew much more of Glastonbury and its origin than men who lived five centuries before them, and this it is which makes it difficult to write a consecutive historical story of the place. I mean, however, to confine myself to what is strictly historical, and when we reach the centuries when these legendary effusions abounded, I will relate such of them as refer to this holy site.

As a site, indeed, we can say of Glastonbury what can be said of no other place in England, viz., that after it had once been sanctified by Christian worship in the time of the ancient Britons, it has never ceased to be aught but a Christian sanctuary. It was a British shrine, and it was never desecrated by heathen Saxondom. When the conquering Saxons reached the Isle of Inys Wytrin they themselves had already been captured to the Faith of the Gospel. But we cannot say exactly that Christian worship was continuous. We cannot say that ere the lamp went out the Saxon priest sang his mass to the light which the British priest had kindled. It is probable there was an interval when the British priest fled in fear of the fury of the Saxons, and the holy place was deserted,

yet not defiled—'twas perhaps the space of a man's life —and then the holy office was begun again, and the strains of prayer and praise were heard again for peace and for protection.

Now, the earliest writer on the antiquities of Glastonbury was William, the historian monk of Malmesbury, who went to Glastonbury about 1129 to write at the invitation of the monks. It was a book written to order, and though no critical edition has yet been published, it is certain that William's story has been largely interpolated in later times. Yet William was then shown documents which he describes as then perishing from age and almost illegible. He gives us the names of three abbots—Worgret, Lodemund, and Bregoret—British abbots of the monastery in the times before the Saxons had come in. One of these documents was a grant to the abbey by a British King of Damnonia, who has been identified as Gwrgan Varvtrwch, and this gives us 601 as the date of Abbot Worgret, the earliest historical evidence we possess of the abbey. Another piece of evidence which, though not put in writing till long after, is certainly contemporary with the disasters that fell on the Britons and their Church, tells us of the ancient faith as it flourished in the second half of the sixth century in the south-west. It told how there were three perpetual choirs of Britain —Lland Iltud Vawr in Glamorganshire, the choir of Ambrosius at Ambresbury, and the choir at Inys Wytrin. The monastery of Ambrosius was destroyed by the heathen Saxons, the monastery on the Isle was won and used by Christian Saxons, and the shrine of St. Iltud was never occupied by the Teutonic conquerors.

But in English history the life of Glastonbury begins with the reforming work carried on by King Ine at the instigation of St. Aldhelm. At some date between 680 and 701, Ine *a novo fecit, i.e.*, restored the spiritual life of the place, and began again the worship that had been given up, and it is probable that the first English abbot

was one Beorwold, who is mentioned in the letters of St. Boniface. It would be impossible to tell of all the ancient endowments of Glastonbury. The English charters conferring estates on the monastery begin in 904, when King Eadward granted Wrington to the abbey; and the lands which the abbey possessed before the English invasion and regained afterwards were the isle of Glastonbury or the ancient twelve Hides, and the estate of Brent, comprising the present parishes of East and South Brent. Ine also gave largely to the monastery, and from the opening years of the eighth century downwards, the stream of royal and princely benefactions increases into immense proportions. In the eighth century England began to suffer from the invasion of the heathen Danes, and the monasteries of the north-east were the first to feel the fury of the heathen. There was a tradition quoted by William of Malmesbury that Abbot Ticca, whose date is not quite certain, but who probably belongs to the second half of the eighth century, brought the bones of the Northumbrian saints, and deposited them in safety at Glastonbury. This was probably the beginning, and a true beginning, of that later legend which placed at Glastonbury the bones of every renowned saint of Ireland and Wales, as well as of England. But the heathen certainly came to Glastonbury, as they came to Lindisfarne and Streoneshalch. The life of St. Neot is not historical, and when Alfred was hiding at Athelney it cannot be imagined that Glastonbury was uninjured by the Danes. They would, however, have valued the property of the living monks, and not the bones of dead bishops, so the relics of Ticca may have remained undestroyed, and probably never discovered.

But there is another version of this story given by William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta Pontificum*, where he tells us that King Eadmund, 940-946, as the result of his Northumbrian expedition, brought to Glastonbury the bones of St. Aidan, Ceolfrith, Benedict Biscop, Beda,

Glastonbury Abbey.

Bega, Hild, and others, and if this is correct, then Abbot Ticca's place is not that assigned to him in the *Antiquities of Glastonbury*, and both statements of William can be reconciled by supposing that Ticca was the abbot who preceded the famous Dunstan. If this was the case, then the Danes ravaged before the relics were brought here.

Dunstan was at once the greatest man of his time in England and the greatest of the early English Abbots of Glastonbury. He was born close by, and was made Abbot by King Eadmund in 942. He is said to have been brought up by some Irish monks who had settled near the monastery, and it seems evident from his subsequent action that Glastonbury had become a place of secular priests or of priests who were very slack monks, and Dunstan substituted for them monks of the reformed Order of Benedictines of Fleury. Under Dunstan, Glastonbury became a favourite place among the contemporary kings of England, and here were buried Eadmund the First, Eadgar "*rex pacificus*," and Eadmund known as Ironside.

In 1032, the great Knut came to Glastonbury with Æthelnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury, and he showed a special respect to the tomb of Eadmund Ironside, and gave various privileges to the abbey.

We must now speak of the buildings at Glastonbury as they were in early English times before we go on to tell its story when England was conquered by the Norman duke. It was probably a collection of cells or huts in which the monks lived and three or four churches, the whole being surrounded by an earthen rampart for protection, as at Iona, Melrose, or Streoneshalch. To the earliest of these churches already a mysterious sanctity was being ascribed, for the biographer of St. Dunstan, who wrote before the year 1000, writes of it as *ecclesia nullâ hominum arte constructa.* It was clearly the church which had been built by the Celtic choir, and carried back the traditions to the ages before the English

conquest. To the east of this King Ine had built another church, which was dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul, and we are told by William of Malmesbury of two other churches to the east—a stone church built by SS. Phaganus and Diruvianus, and another by St. David. The story of William is evidence for the existence of four churches, of which the origin assigned was right in two cases, while the other two may well have been due to the Irish and Welsh monks who came on pilgrimage.

At the time of the Norman conquest, Glastonbury was found to be the centre of English intrigue and patriotism. So great was Duke William's suspicion that, as a precaution, since he had not in his characteristic fashion as yet subdued the south-west of England, in 1067 he took away with him Abbot Ægelnoth to Normandy, and there he held him as a hostage for the good conduct of the English monks. Ægelnoth has a bad name in William of Malmesbury's story of the abbey, and it is probable that he made his peace with the Conqueror by giving him largely of the abbey's treasure. At any rate, Ægelnoth remained Abbot until his death in 1081, and the grounds for the Glastonbury monks' reproach was that he had squandered the property of the monastery.

Ægelnoth was succeeded by Thurstan, the first Norman abbot, a man who showed the inflexible will of the conquering race, and whose name has come down to us stained with the death of not a few of his monks. Thurstan was a reformer. He came from Caen, where Archbishop Lanfranc had been Abbot, and where the latest developments of Benedictinism were to be met with, and it is evident that his reforms were not acceptable to the easy-going English monks he was appointed to govern. Among other improvements, he introduced a new method of plain song which had been brought out by Abbot William of Fécamp. This the monks would have none of, and so, to enforce his wish, he introduced some Norman soldiers into the monastery for the purpose

of coercing the monks. He had previously tried to argue with them in the chapter-house, and when the monks saw the soldiers, they fled to the church, and barricaded themselves within it. Now, the church was in process of being rebuilt, and it is evident that, as elsewhere, so at Glastonbury the new Norman Abbot was busy in building for the monastery a new church. Nothing now remains of it, and there is no indication as to its positive relation to the old church, the *vetusta ecclesiola* which told of ancient Celtic piety; but probably it was on the east of it, a site which was afterwards occupied by the great church of which we still linger to admire the admirable proportions and the exquisite beauty of its ruins. The building, however, was unfinished, and the Norman soldiers, unable to get in at the door, mounted on the up floor of the aisles, and then shot their arrows at the cowering monks below. One was killed by a spear thrust, and another shot with an arrow even as he clung to the altar, and fourteen others were seriously injured. The noise of this disgraceful disturbance naturally soon came to the ears of William; the disobedient monks were distributed among other monasteries, and Thurstan was removed from his office. Thus for a time peace was obtained, but when William Rufus reigned, seven years afterwards, it is said that Thurstan purchased his reinstation as abbot.

The successor of Thurstan was Herlewin, 1101-1120, who is said to have been a great builder, and to have been engaged in building a yet larger church than that which Thurstan had attempted. But in 1126, Henry of Blois, brother of Stephen, afterwards King of England, came as Abbot, and though he seems to have been content with Herlewin's church, he was actively engaged in rebuilding the monastic houses and rooms necessary for the use of the increasing number of monks. In 1178 the monastery fell into the hands of Henry II., owing to the death of Abbot Robert of Winchester, and in

1184 the whole of the monastery, with the exception of a bell tower built by Abbot Henry and one small chapel, was consumed by fire. This fact in itself is alone evidence that a good deal of the previous building had been built with timber, and that we cannot expect to find any traces of such work remaining. But Henry II. felt a certain responsibility in the fact that the catastrophe occurred when his chamberlain, Peter de Marci, was in charge, and he resolved to rebuild the monastery largely at his own cost. The fire had not spared even the ancient church at the west, and this Lady Chapel or ancient chapel of St. Mary, of which the ruins still remain, is the work of Henry II. It was finished and dedicated by Reginald, Bishop of Bath, on June 11th, 1186. Henry also laid the foundations of the great church to the east of the Lady Chapel, and also rebuilt most of the monastic buildings that were required. The great church was four hundred feet long and eighty feet broad, and since the building of it went on till the death of Henry in 1189, there must have been a good deal more of the walls than the mere foundations completed before the death of this monarch. It was for more than a hundred years that the work then stopped, and the reason why no further progress was made in the great church we will soon discover.

But we must now go back and think of the visit of William of Malmesbury about the year 1130, in the abbotship of Henry of Blois. William had made himself famous as a writer of history, and it was on account of this that he was invited by the monks to come and help them at Glastonbury. This century was the age of the Romancists, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was a contemporary of William's, wrote a history which he tells us was based on ancient manuscripts, but which we now know was based on an utterly unreliable story attributed to Nennius, and which brought in a mass of legend as if it was true British history. An ancient British chieftain, Arthur, now appears, and is surrounded with a halo of

legend which shows that a real historical character is being confused with some heroes of ancient heathen Celtic mythology.

William of Malmesbury told us what was generally known of the early history of Glastonbury in his earlier works. There were the relics of many Northumbrian English saints, there were said to be the bones of some unknown Celtic saints, Indractus and Diruvianus, and there were said to be the bones of an Irish saint known as the junior St. Patrick. When we turn to the antiquities of Glastonbury, we must remember that William is not the historian sifting and editing his materials, but the ready and facile scribe putting on parchment whatever his employers, the monks of Glastonbury, told him. Now, there were two Celtic heathen myths which were given a Christian setting in the twelfth century by these Norman romancists. The one found its antitype in the legend of Joseph of Arimathea and the holy cup from which our Lord had drunk at the Last Supper, and the other, in the memory dear to the West of England among the subject Celtic population of that valiant Celtic warrior, the only one who had ever won in the fight against the Saxons. Where should he lie buried but at Inys Wytrin, and who could have been the founder of the monastery but the devout counsellor, Joseph of Arimathea? Our present edition of William of Malmesbury's *Antiquities of the Abbey* is uncritical, and has been largely interpolated since the times of William, but here it is that we begin to see the beginning of those legends of which so much was made in the three subsequent centuries.

Henry II. was greatly interested, as we have seen, in Glastonbury, and probably more so because he had reason to fall back on the loyalty of the Celtic population of the island. He was anxious to gain the succession of the Duchy of Brittany for his son Geoffrey, and not only was the name of Arthur invoked, but he is said to have received a letter from the dead hero. At any rate, when

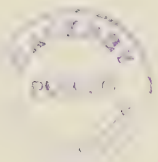
he was in Wales, he was urged to seek for the remains of Arthur at Glastonbury. So search was made at his instigation, and in 1191 the Abbot, Henry de Soliaco, discovered the remains of Arthur and of his Queen in leaden coffins, of which that of Arthur's had, on a cross-shaped tablet, the inscription: "*Hic jacet sepultus inclytus rex Arturius in insula Avalonia.*"

Now, among the names of heroes buried at Glastonbury, as told by the monks to the historian William, were several of the gods of ancient Celtic heathendom—Glast and Avallac, Catgur and Cadmor, gods of the lower world, corresponding to Dîs of Greek and Pluto of Latin mythology. This fact is of further interest, because the earlier forms which have survived in ancient folklore located the under world in the lands of the west, and so it is probable that the isle of Avallac was, in legend, surrounded as it was by those almost impassable morasses, regarded as the home of those who had died, and as it was hoped they would live again, so there would be located the celebrated cauldron of new life or of regeneration into which the souls of dead heroes were dipped, and out of which they came up alive and healed of their wounds. So as the heathen fancy seized on the imagination of the Norman romancists, as often as Arthur came to life again so he must have been taken to Avallac to be plunged into this mysterious bowl.

It is difficult, of course, to sift these stories. Men made assertions, and offered no proofs, and one cannot refute them, because we cannot say what grounds they had for those statements.

Glastonbury, however, is growing. Historically, it is full of interest, but now it has captured our imagination —weird, hoary, dark, and in part unintelligible, its legends are placed before us—can we dare to deny it all? Well, little of it was believed in by England in the twelfth century, but slowly the outward visible sign of some costly monument or shrine made it the more difficult, and in

North Doorway, St. Joseph's Chapel, Glastonbury Abbey.



the fifteenth century it was unpatriotic not to be believers in it.

We come now to a very troubled period in the history and the fortunes of Glastonbury. The Abbey was far the largest landowner in Somerset, and its abbots held a sort of suzerain authority over the Abbots of Muchelney and Athelney, who claimed freedom from visitation, save in the chapter-house of the greater abbey. The buildings were all new. Cloister and dormitory and refectory and other necessary houses had all been lately rebuilt, and the little ancient chapel of St. Mary had been builded anew, and the great church to the east of it was rising from the ground with a promise of being one of the grandest monastic churches in England. Everything seemed full of promise, and the future was certainly bright. But Glastonbury was part of the Diocese of Bath, and the churches which had been given to the abbey were churches in this diocese over which both Bishop and Archdeacon should have jurisdiction. The abbey, however, like many other Benedictine abbeys, claimed exemption from the visitatorial powers of the Bishop and the Archdeacon, and the Bishop could only enquire into the spiritual condition of these churches through the Lord Abbot. But Robert (1136-1166) and Reginald (1174-1191), Bishops of the diocese, had been active at Wells, not only in building a new cathedral church, but also in developing and organising for the welfare of the diocese and its clergy. There were now three new Archdeaconries of Wells, Taunton, and Bath, in place of the one Archdeacon of Wells, and still there were these churches dependent on the abbey where the Bishop's jurisdiction was resisted. So Bishop Reginald induced Robert of Winchester, Abbot of Glastonbury, to endow a prebendal stall with the church of Pilton, and to accept the post of a Canon of Wells. Meanwhile, he was to create a special officer in the abbey to act as Archdeacon over these churches, and the Archdeacon of Wells was

to receive as compensation the church of South Brent in lieu of the churches over which he was now to resign all claims. When the monastery realised what had been done, there was no small stir. They saw their Lord Abbot in the subject position of a Canon of Wells, and they were for immediate repudiation of the arrangement. Things were, however, too strong for them. If the succeeding Abbot, Henry de Soliaco, refused to be a Canon, the abbey was unable to get back their churches of Pilton and South Brent. The abbey had certainly lost by the transaction.

But worse things were to come. On the death of the Bishop Reginald, Savaric of Le Mans, one of the boldest diplomatists and busiest intriguers of the age, got himself made Bishop of Bath. The work that had been going on at Wells made him conscious that there were two centres in the diocese, though the title of the Bishopric was not yet a double one. Savaric, however, practised with Henry de Soliaco, and through the Emperor obtained from the Pope the promotion of Abbot Henry to be Bishop of Worcester, and for himself the Abbotship of Glastonbury. King Richard was consoled with the surrender of the city of Bath. All these negotiations were carried on in the greatest secrecy, and Abbot Henry left the abbey in Advent, 1193, and was consecrated Bishop of Worcester by the Archbishop of Canterbury, December 12th, 1193. Then Savaric sent for the Prior, Henry, to come to him at Bath, and asked him where his Abbot was. Henry replied that he was in London. Then Savaric replied: "*Absoluti estis ab eo ego sum abbas vestis*" ("You are released from him: I am your Abbot"). So Henry, with a sad heart, returned to Glastonbury to relate to the indignant monks what an evil fate had come upon them. Independence was a joy of the past: Savaric reigned at Bath, at Wells, and at Glastonbury. So the building of the great church stopped, for there could be little zeal for such work until this great evil was set aside.

The monks at once appealed to Rome, and every effort had to be made to get the arrangement annulled. Savaric, however, had a bull from Celestine III., and that could not be set aside, and when the monks appealed, he went himself to Rome, and got a confirmatory bull in his favour and also a papal prohibition to the monks to forbid their electing an Abbot for themselves. But the monks did not lose heart. They knew that both King and Archbishop were opposed to this arrangement, and the King was doing all he could to get matters reversed at Rome. They sent, therefore, William Pica as their agent, and soon he came back with permission to elect, and the monks naturally chose him. But Savaric was not a man to yield easily. His agents were everywhere. Eustace, an agent of the monastery, was seized at Rouen and imprisoned, and Pica nearly fell into his hands. Then Richard died, and John, the friend of Savaric, became King, and in 1199 Savaric was enthroned as Abbot, and Harold and forty monks, whose names are preserved, made their submission to him. The storm was too strong. For the present the monks had to yield.

When the friends of Savaric captured Eustace at Rouen, Pica escaped and got to Rome, excommunicated by his Abbot as an apostate and runaway monk. There he was able to show the unjust nature of the excommunication and the true character of Bishop Savaric, and soon was absolved from his sentence; but he did not live to enjoy his success very long, and a mysterious death in Italy was regarded by the monks of Glastonbury as a proof that he had been poisoned by Savaric's emissaries. So the tyranny lasted for five long years, until Jocelyn succeeded Savaric as Bishop. That year, Pope Innocent III. wrote that if the union of Bath and Glastonbury was found to be prejudicial to the interests of Glastonbury, an appeal might be made, and Pandulf, the Papal Legate then in England, was commissioned to enquire whether there had been any bargain between

Savaric and the King to barter away the Bishop's rights in the city of Bath for the Abbotship of Glastonbury. At last, a final concord was reached and solemnly ratified on May 17th, 1219, by which Bishop Jocelyn gave up the Abbotship and the title of Glastonbury as part of the title of his Bishopric, but kept the patronship of the abbey, and to compensate him for his loss received from the abbey the four manors of Winscombe, Pucklechurch, Blackford-in-Wedmore, and Cranmore. So the monks were doubly impoverished. They lost four large estates, and they were burdened with a heavy debt caused by the long series of negotiations and appeals they had to make in Rome. Nor were they really free, for the patronship retained by the Bishop meant practically that they were no longer tenants in chief, but held their lands of the Bishop, that the Bishop would answer for them to the King, and that instead of petitioning the Crown for the *congé d'elire* when a vacancy in the Abbotship occurred, they would have to apply to the Bishop. It was still a grievance, and one they tried hard to abolish, but not till the time of Bishop Burnell and Edward I. did they succeed, when, in 1275, the abbey gave up all claim to the four manors, and Edward I. received from the monks one thousand marks, and gave the Bishop a rent-charge of £35 a year on the two royal manors of Congresbury and Bath. That same year they had a further loss through the fall of the votive chapel of St. Michael on the Tor, which appears to have been caused by a landslip on the eastern side of the hill. What a century of trouble! It began with the total destruction of the abbey by fire, and it ended with loss by earthquake or landslip and an enormous debt caused by incessant law-suits. We can well understand why the building scheme had not advanced, and why the great church had to wait until the fourteenth century for completion and for adornment.

It was probably the royal visit of Edward and his Queen, Eleanor, in 1278, when he stayed for a week and

kept his Easter there, which re-started the building scheme, and gave fresh heart to Abbot John de Taunton and his monks. From that time the work began again. Slowly and steadily the walls and the magnificent arches rose heavenward, and the choir was roofed in by Abbot Fromond, 1305-1322, and the church solemnly dedicated; and Prior Walter de Taunton built the screen; and Adam de Sodbury, who was Abbot 1322-1335, vaulted the nave; and Walter de Monington, who was Abbot 1342-1372, vaulted the choir and presbytery, and lengthened the church eastward by two arches.

We must now turn once more to the legendary history of the abbey. The fourteenth century witnessed not merely the completion of the buildings of the abbey and the houses and kitchen of the abbots and the lodgings for the guests, but also some very definite additions made to the legends and to the relationship of the legends to Glastonbury. We have mentioned how, in the time of Henry I., there was discovered the tomb of Arthur, with an appropriate inscription attached to his coffin. They were found between two pyramids or stone monuments, which had always been supposed to record the burial-place of some warrior or saint of renown. There were, however, two pairs of these pyramids or monuments. One pair was on the north side, near the old church, *i.e.*, the western Lady Chapel, and the other pair in front of the monks' cemetery. It is said that as late as 1777 one pair of these obelisks or monuments existed on the edge of the burial ground a few feet from the north-west angle of the old Lady Chapel. When Edward I. came to the monastery in 1278, this tomb was re-opened to show the tomb of this great monarch and his famous queen.

During the thirteenth century, the two beautiful legends of St. Joseph of Arimathea and the Holy Grail and that of the great and noble Arthur had gradually been drawing together. It was natural, because both of the legends had their roots in ancient Celtic mythology, and

as these myths were redressed and received Christian additions, there was no reason why they should not be linked together. Our earliest versions of the two legends keep them both apart. Joseph of Arimathea and the Holy Grail had nothing to do with Arthur, and Arthur had nothing to do with Joseph of Arimathea. We can see, however, the link. Arthur was to come again, and so Arthur must be dipped in the cauldron of regeneration, or the Holy Grail, as it came afterwards to be designated. So the Holy Grail became the link between Joseph of Arimathea and Arthur. Now, it is not at all improbable that the great Celtic warrior who won the battle of Mons Badonicus in 520 was really buried at Inys Wytrin. Ambresbury was too near the advancing foe, and Llan Iltyd Vawr was too far off, and Inys Wytrin was convenient, whether he fell fighting the rebellious British of Cornwall or of Wales. The monks, therefore, may not have been incorrect in their facts. Where they erred was in confusing this real Celtic hero with the ideal hero of Celtic mythology. However, the slow accretions helped the ambitions of the monks for the traditional grandeur of their monastery. Therefore, we find these interpolations concerning Joseph of Arimathea as the founder of Glastonbury inserted in William of Malmesbury's history of its antiquities, and since Arthur was buried at Glastonbury and Joseph of Arimathea was connected with him, we have the two names connected with the ancient traditions of the place. Of course, it made no difference that Joseph belonged to the first century of our era and Arthur to the sixth: such an awkward problem belonged to the field of historic criticism, which was not in favour at Glastonbury or, indeed, in mediæval England. In 1345, J. Blome obtained permission from Edward III. to search and excavate in the abbey for the remains of Joseph of Arimathea, and in 1367 these remains were found. So there was evidence for both great legends, and now the ancient Lady Chapel at the west of the great church began

to be spoken of as the chapel of Joseph of Arimathea, and the monastery did all it could to make the chapel the centre of a pilgrimage, and a shrine was erected to excite the enthusiastic devotion of the pilgrims, and also to be an object for their offerings.

Yet few in England believed in this, at least outside of Glastonbury. They accepted the assertions of the monks without enquiring into their veracity, and it was not till the time of Henry VI. that it became an unpatriotic thing to reject the legend, for it had been used with effect at the Council of Basel against the claims of the Church in France. There could be no doubt of it now, for cures were wrought at the tomb of Joseph; and in the life of Joseph, printed in 1520 by Richard Pynson, which gives us the story as it was told at Glastonbury, we have a record of the miracles which were assuredly wrought there in the year 1502-3: a child that had died at Wells was restored to life, a vicar from Wells was cured of his lameness, and a would-be suicide at Banwell was healed of his self-afflicted wounds, and many others. Strangely enough, the tomb of Joseph seems to have survived the dissolution of the monastery, for as late as 1662 Mr. Ray saw the tomb in the chapel at the end of the great church.

Unfortunately, this was not the only fraud which the monks of Glastonbury brought themselves to believe in. Nor were the monks of Glastonbury the only monks who thus acted. In mediæval England the credulity of the people was amazing, and each shrine was puffed to induce pilgrims and to accumulate wealth. There had been a standing controversy between Glastonbury and the monks of Christchurch, Canterbury, concerning the bones of St. Dunstan. It was claimed that as early as the days of King Eadmund Ironside, Abbot Beohtred and four monks from Glastonbury had hurried off to Canterbury, which they found desolate and deserted from fear of the Danes, and thence they had brought back with them the bones of him who had once been their abbot. The story as

far as the visit was concerned may have been true, but Archbishop Lanfranc would not have lent himself to a fraud, and before his eyes the tomb of Dunstan had been opened, and the bones were seen intact and undisturbed. Again, in the sixteenth century, an attempt was made to settle the dispute. Abbot Beere, at Glastonbury, stoutly claimed possession of these relics, and Archbishop Warham, in 1508, ordered Prior Thomas Goldston to search for the tomb, and to discover whether it was undisturbed. Truly enough, it was seen, and the bones were there, and a tablet ran: "*Hic requiscit sanctus Dunstanus archiepiscopus.*" Yet Abbot Beere would not give up his claim, and the dissolution came with both monasteries firm in their assertion of possession of these relics.

The monastery which began so mysteriously ended most tragically. The last Abbot, Richard Whiting, was the son of a Glastonbury tenant at Wrington, and was brought up at the monastic school in the abbey. He took his degree at Cambridge in 1483, and was ordained priest in 1503. In 1525, Abbot Beere died, and the monks were summoned to choose his successor. Forty-seven monks assembled for the purpose, and probably to gain his favour they invited Cardinal Wolsey to nominate to the office. So Wolsey chose Richard Whiting, and he was solemnly blessed as Abbot, March 8th, 1525, by Bishop William Gilbert, acting as Suffragan to Bishop Clecke, of Bath and Wells.

To reach such a post as Abbot of Glastonbury was to obtain one of the most honourable and, we may say, enviable positions an Englishman could occupy, and Richard Whiting had been selected for the post without any efforts on his own part to gain it. Glastonbury was certainly the wealthiest monastery in the West of England, and was the second in importance in the kingdom. In addition to the splendid chambers and establishment at Glastonbury, distinct from and to the

Interior of St. Joseph's Chapel, Glastonbury Abbey.

south-west of the monastic cloister and refectory, the abbot had private manor-houses at Sharpham, Meare, and Pilton, in the immediate vicinity, and several others at a yet greater distance. Leland tells us how he rejoiced at the sight of the literary treasures of the monastery, and it is certain that in the sixteenth century Glastonbury was the centre of culture, morality, and religious zeal. At the visitation of Archbishop Warham in 1490, while at St. Albans much was found to censure, at Glastonbury all was correct, and Abbot Selwood and his monks were found to be faithful and blameless.

In 1535, the Act which conferred on Henry VIII. the title of Supreme Head of the Church of England was passed, and Thomas Cromwell, the new Vicar-General, was soon at work with his commissioners in presenting this Act for their acceptance on the monks of all the monastic houses of England. On September 19th, 1534, the Commissioners arrived at Glastonbury, and Whiting and fifty-one monks subscribed to the Act and its oath which was offered them. The Commissioners were, however, intent on discovering arguments for a general suppression of the monasteries, and in 1536 the Act was passed which gave over to the King every monastery whose annual rental was under £200 a year. At Glastonbury, the revenues were far greater, and as yet nothing had been discovered which could bring upon the place the censure of the King. So in August, 1535, Dr. Richard Layton came again to Glastonbury, and writes thence to Cromwell that there was nothing notable: the monks were so straitly kept that they could not offend. In August it was evident that the Abbot perceived that evil times were coming, and he sent a present of the advowson of the church of West Monckton to Cromwell, if by any means he might propitiate him. One by one presents were made of corrodies and of estates and shooting rights to Cromwell, the Commissioners, and to leading statesmen, and in vain to

win their favour. Layton, ere he left, had enjoined on Whiting to confine himself to his manor at Sharpham, and not to enter into communication with his monks. So greatly, however, had Layton been impressed with Whiting's character, that he drew upon himself the reproof of Cromwell on account of the favourable report he had made of the Abbot. Whiting protested against this separation, and in 1536 had to suffer the slander by which Layton hoped to get himself again into favour.

In 1539, the second Act of Parliament had delivered into the King's hands such monasteries as should be forfeited by attainder of treason, and the way was now made clear for encompassing the attainder of Whiting. On September 19th, 1539, the Commissioners—Layton, Pollard, and Moyle—visited Glastonbury, and began their inquisitorial search. Whiting had been confined to Sharpham, and there they said they discovered a work in the library against the divorce and also a life of Archbishop Thomas of Canterbury. They found, also, many silver and gold vessels—ornaments, indeed, of God's sanctuary, but objects of the Commissioners' covetous rapacity—concealed in the walls of the monastery, *i.e.*, shut up in aumbries for safety, and this seemed to them evidence of intention to embezzle property that should belong to the King. Whiting was then sent up, in September, to the Tower of London, and his servants were discharged; and in October Pollard forwarded to Cromwell, for the King, a second harvest of spoil from the abbey, *i.e.*, 71 ounces of gold with precious stones, 7,214 ounces of gilt plate, and 6,387 ounces of silver. Meanwhile, Cromwell was noting that the evidence against Whiting should be carefully sifted, and the indictment skilfully drawn, and in his remembrancer he wrote: "Item —the Abbot of Glaston to be tried at Glaston, and executed there."

Whiting and two monks, John Thorne and Roger James, were then arraigned for treason on the charge that

they had feloniously hidden from the King some of the treasures of the abbey. Meanwhile, the abbey was seized by the King as forfeited by treason, and this before the trial had really taken place. Lord John Russell had got together at Wells a jury that might be trusted. So early in November, poor Richard Whiting and his fellow-prisoners began their sad journey to Wells, and there, in the great hall of Bishop Burnell, on Friday, November 14th, he and his companions were found guilty, and condemned to death. On Saturday, November 15th, they were taken to Glastonbury, where Thorne and James were the first to suffer. Then the aged and holy abbot was placed on a hurdle, and drawn through the town, and ultimately hung on Tor Hill.

The spoils of the abbey were immense. Eagerly as they were gathered in, so speedily were they wasted. In 1547, the site and buildings were granted by Edward VI. to Edward, Duke of Somerset, the Protector. In 1551, an attempt was made to plant here a colony of Flemish weavers, and they were to be allowed to have their own religious services, and Vallerandus Pullanus was appointed their minister. Two years afterwards, however, on the accession of Queen Mary, the weavers were sent back to Frankfurt and the other refuge places of the Protestants. For a time the Queen seriously contemplated the restoration of the abbey, but it was soon found impossible, and in 1558 Queen Elizabeth granted the site of the late monastery to Sir Peter Carew, knight.

T. SCOTT HOLMES.

WELLS CATHEDRAL

By the Rev. Canon Church, M.A., F.S.A.

THE Cathedral Church of Wells is an historical monument—one of the glories of our land, the special inheritance of our county. It carries in its fabric many memorials of our national progress and of generations of workers and builders whose names are for the most part lost to fame, while their works survive to bear witness to their labours and their skill, and to provoke us, the heirs of all the ages, to emulation by the grace and beauty and strength of their achievements.

There are two sources of its history—the architectural features, and the original charters and documents. They illustrate and confirm one another. Historical research demands that we should go as far back as possible to original sources for the support or correction of traditional beliefs. Original documents in the possession of the Chapter of Wells have been brought to light and published within late years which have corrected and filled up the meagre and inaccurate epitomes of Wells history printed in the seventeenth century by Godwin and Wharton, on which the local and architectural history has been based. These charters and registers are much earlier and fuller than the episcopal registers, and the documentary evidence for the cathedral history is mainly derived from these capitular documents.

The mountain limestone hills of Mendip which form

the northern boundary of Somerset have many kindred points of character and feature with the greater limestone mountains of Greece and Palestine.

Springs of water lose themselves alike in the "swallets" of the Mendip and in the "Katavothra" of Arcadia, and, percolating through the limestone fissures, burst out at the foot of some distant cliff, in some cavern and valley, with the volume of a river. Those who know the glen and cavern of Wookey Hole, at the sources of the river Axe, may see there a striking resemblance in natural features to the scene of the cliff, the glen, the cavern, the falling cascade of waters at the source of the river Jordan, at the foot of Mount Hermon by the sacred spot of Cæsarea Philippi, in the Holy Land. Other like water springs in the Mendip district have been consecrated in past times by shrines, heathen or Christian, possibly at Cheddar and Banwell, and certainly at Wells. There the "great fountain of St. Andrew" has for twelve hundred years marked the settlement of early Christian Saxon missionaries of St. Aldhelm's time. A strong and consistent tradition records the death of St. Aldhelm, the missionary Bishop of the West Saxons, at the little wooden church of Doulting on the Mendip in A.D. 705, and the planting of a mission station in the valley at Wells about that time. Legend fixed upon Wells as the place of espousals of Ine of Wessex and Adelburga, his queen.

Since that time a Christian church has ever stood beside these springing wells, and the never-failing stream, like "Siloa's brook," has ever flowed "fast by the oracle of God." In the course of successive centuries, the little Saxon church grew into the church of Joscelin, and of Ralph, with lofty walls and towers and gables, with Chapter House and Lady Chapel, and each separate building, as it rose, stood day by day reflected in the still waters of the crystal pool, until, as now, the whole fabric, in one harmonious grouping of buildings, fitly framed

together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, is mirrored in pictured semblance—

> Even as the swan in still St. Mary's lake
> Floats double—swan and shadow.

Lower down the stream has been made to fall into the broad channels of a moat which encircles the little islet, on which are built the battlemented walls and towers and gateway of the palace of the Bishop.

Further on its course the stream of St. Andrew has determined the oblique course of the line of houses of the town which has grown upon its banks, among which has stood the parish church from the days of Edward the Elder, who dedicated it to the memory of St. Cuthbert, his father's patron saint and supporter at Athelney, and who also planted at its source the seat of the Bishop for the men of Somerset in the upper church of St. Andrew in Wells.

The character of the little city which derives its name and its being from the Wells of St. Andrew are represented in the ancient seal of the city. This seal, on the obverse, bears at top a head with saintly aureole, over three arched porches of a church; below are buildings with roofs and gables and doors; at a lower tier are three fountains of water. A marginal legend runs round: "*Sigillum : commune : burgi : Welliæ : .*" On the reverse is a thick-leaved tree; waters issue at its roots; birds are in the branches, and are drinking at the springs. Around is the legend: "⊙ ✠ *Andrea : famulos : more : tuere : tuos : . .*"

This seal is an historical document. It represents the natural features, the architectural fabric, the ecclesiastical character of the city by the side of fountains of water. The date of the earliest extant impression of this seal is 1315. It is such a seal as Bishop Joscelin might have designed for his people when he consecrated the church of St. Andrew, on the day of St. Romanus, in the year 1239,

Wells Cathedral.

as if commending to the protection of St. Andrew the church, and the dwellings of his people on either side of the stream, which was the source of life to the trees that grow thereby, and to the birds that sing among the branches and that drink from the springs, and to the people that dwell therein. So might their Bishop, the maker of their city, bid his people to hallow each act of their city life as often as they impressed their city seal, with the invocation to their patron saint: "Fail not, blessed Andrew, to protect thy servants ever."[1]

From the time of Edward, son of Alfred, the first church and buildings under Saxon bishops stood on the ground south of the present church. There Giso, the last Saxon Bishop, added largely, by diplomatic talents and royal gifts, to the possessions of the Bishop. The canons and ministers of the Church at that time were the tenants or family of the Bishop, and dependent upon him for their support; the foreign, half-monastic discipline of Chrodegang of Metz was introduced into the church of Wells, and the canons of Wells lived in monastic buildings, with a common refectory and dormitory and cloister round their church. Late excavations on this ground have laid open foundations of a small church on a different axis from the present building, and a fragment of stone carefully worked in Saxon ornament marks this ground as the site of the Saxon church. At the time of the Domesday survey the lands of Giso the Bishop formed an estate in extent and value second only to the estate of the Abbot of Glastonbury. But the Saxon church did not long survive the Norman Conquest. The next Bishop, a Frenchman, transferred the bishop's seat to Bath. There, despoiling the canons of Wells, and leaving church and buildings to dilapidation, he began to build a spacious Norman church and palace.

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[1] *Cf.*, *The Corporation Plate and Insignia of Office of Cities and Corporate Towns of England and Wales*, by Llewellynn Jewitt, F.S.A., and W. H. St. John Hope, M.A. London: Bemrose, 1895.

Wells lost for a time the pre-eminence which it had held for a hundred and eighty years as the seat of the Bishop of the Sumorsaetas. "Andrew gave place to Peter—the elder to the younger."

John of Tours, in 1088, coming from that famous and stately city on the banks of the Loire, with the shrine of St. Martin and the Abbey of Marmoutier on either bank, thought scorn of the "ignorant canons" whom he found at the little Saxon church of St. Andrew in Wells. He preferred the city with its hot mineral springs, in so fair a site, between main roads and navigable river, girt about by its coronal of hills, with natural advantages which had made it the seat of Roman and Saxon civilisation; where, little more than a century before—in 973—Edgar, conqueror of Danish and Celtic districts of England, had been crowned by two Archbishops, Dunstan and Oswald, and the abbey church of St. Peter was the scene of the completion of the unity of England.

But, notwithstanding the attractions of Bath, in fifty years Wells revived. The Bishops through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—Robert, Reginald, Savaric, Joscelin—turned back to the rustic simplicity of Wells, and built up the ruined church, its fabric and constitution of secular canons, until Wells became by degrees more and more the centre of business for the diocese, practically the chief seat of the Bishop, the "sedes praesulea" and mother church of the diocese. The Bishops found themselves more free in a chapter of secular canons, and more in touch with the provincial landowners; and under the prebendal constitution of Bishop Robert reciprocal relations grew up between the country districts and the cathedral church, through the tenure of prebendal estates by the canons.

As the changes in the construction of the material building were slow and gradual, so gradual and chequered were the advances to maturity of power of the capitular body. The canons of the cathedral church had been at

first a scanty body, tenants of the bishops of the tenth and eleventh centuries. It was not until Bishop Robert's time —1136-1166—that the capitular constitution was formed. A preamble to a charter by Bishop Robert on the appointment of officers ("de ordinatione prebendarum") in the chapter register is of great historic value; it is the first draft of the constitution; it is "the incorporation of the chapter." His action was part of the new policy of the Norman prelates on the reconstitution of the relations of the bishops to their clergy and the formation of capitular bodies with status and property distinct from and independent of the bishop. "The canons became," says Mr. Freeman, "a separate corporation distinct from the bishop, with a certain portion of the episcopal estates made over to them in a common fund, apportioned according to residence, and certain other estates were cut up into smaller portions or *prebenda*, of which each canon held one as a corporation sole." At the same time were founded certain offices, with duties assigned and endowments attached—Dean, Precentor, Chancellor, Treasurer. Canons now got for the first time a head of their own body, distinct from the bishop, elected by themselves. The other officers were in the appointment of the bishop. Such is the origin of the capitular constitution, not only at Wells, but generally. This constitution was not the act of one man only, but of a public council; it was not devised by the Bishop of Bath only to meet the immediate wants of the church, as measure of defence against the bishop's autocracy, though Bishop Robert says distinctly that it was his object to secure his canons against such spoliation as they had lately suffered, but also with a view of guarding the property of the Church from the grasp of the Crown, when on occasion of vacancies in the see the Crown took possession of the temporalities and often kept the see vacant from interested motives. But another effect of the separation of the temporal estates and of this new capitular constitution

was the weakening of the old connection between the bishop and the cathedral church.[1]

On the other hand, the division of Church property into prebends and the distribution of the members of the cathedral church through the diocese, as holders of prebendal estates with local responsibilities and duties, brought the Church into touch with the county, increased its influence, and drew support from the diocese to the cathedral church. Gradually the appropriation of churches to the chapter, the endowments of prebends by landlords and laymen, had increased the number of canons to twenty-two in Bishop Robert's time, to thirty-five in that of Bishop Reginald. Savaric gave stalls in choir and chapter to the Abbots of Muchelney and Athelney, and among the Prebendaries for a time were the Abbots of Glastonbury, and of Norman Bec who held the prebend of Cleeve. Under Joscelin the number was further increased to forty-eight; one more prebend, that of Dinder, the last instituted in 1264, made up the staff to forty-nine and a Dean. Each canon had his vicar choral. Residence was optional. To those who entered upon residence under Joscelin, half the year was the obligatory time of residence for simple canons, and three parts of the year for dignitaries. Non-residents were bound to pay their dues and to appear on summons in chapter, either in person or by their vicar as proxy. Schools were established—the choir school under the Precentor, the grammar school under the Chancellor. The "Schola Grammaticalis," endowed with houses in Joscelin's time, included a higher class of students, and together with the choir school made up a large educated community, the predecessor of a college of modern days, consisting of governors and governed, of teachers and students, of men

1 "The Norman Bishops," Mr. H. Bradshaw says, "had brought with them into England a form of government for the cathedral churches which they had followed in their own churches of Rouen and Bayeux, whereby the canons obtained a separate and independent position, and the home government of the Church became vested in them as a body, the chapter."

of various ages, of different ranks, from various parts, of young men and boys, under discipline and education. The cathedral church became a centre of religious worship, but also an educational institution standing midway between the monastery and the modern university.

Henceforth the history of the two bodies, episcopal and capitular, necessarily runs somewhat distinct, in two parallel lines, often independent and somewhat antagonistic. The bishops of the next hundred years were the makers of Wells in church and constitution: Robert, 1136-66; Reginald, 1174-91; Joscelin, 1206-42.

During the turmoil and anarchy of the reign of Stephen, Bishop Robert was building up the Norman church which had been begun at Bath by Bishop John. At the same time he was building at Wells.

It is hard to say whether Robert's work at Wells was the beginning of a new church, or the repair and rebuilding of the dilapidated Saxon church in new form. We know that he consecrated the work which he had done at Wells in 1148, twelve years after his election. With the great work of the Norman church at Bath on his hands, it is more likely that at Wells he was satisfied with the restoration of the older church of Giso. He is more certainly known to us as the founder of the constitution of the church of Wells, which has continued and remains in essential features to the present time.

We know more about the building of the fabric under Bishop Reginald. Reginald de Bohun, whose name bespeaks his Norman birth, was son of Joscelin de Bohun, Bishop of Salisbury, and nephew of Richard de Bohun, Bishop of Coutances. A courtly cavalier in younger days, when attached to the suite of Thomas, Chancellor and Archbishop; then the King's prudent and conciliatory diplomatist, in his quarrel with Becket at Rome, at the court of the Count of Savoy, and at the Grande Chartreuse, whence he brought St. Hugh of Burgundy to the priory at Witham, Reginald was chosen, together with the

powerful Bishop of Durham, to stand by the King's side at the coronation of Richard—an hereditary honour which has been transmitted to his successor in the see even unto these our days. He was through life a man often chosen as negotiator and arbitrator in State affairs, and as such he was called to the Primacy in the last year of his life—1191.

It is a reasonable view that the site of the church was changed, and that new building began on the lines of the present church under Bishop Reginald.[1]

Undoubtedly he was one of the chief builders of the church. Evidences are contained in the chapter documents. Years spent in his diocese, in which he made Wells the chief centre; his expressed care and solicitude for the building and support of the church of Wells; his grant of the revenues of all vacant benefices to form a permanent fabric fund "until the church be completed"; the notices of gifts to the fabric and of work going on at Wells during his episcopate—all testify that Reginald was the first builder of the cathedral. Reginald was the consecrator in 1186 of one of the latest known Norman buildings, the Lady Chapel at the western end of the church of Glastonbury, which had been destroyed by fire. His semi-Norman building at Wells is to be traced in the eastern part of the church, as well as in the north porch, the heavy roll-moulding of the arcading of the triforium, the fantastic imagery in the capitals of the columns, and the square abaci, and externally the flat buttresses and corbel table, are marks of a transitional style passing from Norman to Early English, lighter than the Norman, more massive than Early English.

Savaric, the wild adventurer—

> Through the world travelling, all the world's guest,
> His last day of life his first day of rest—

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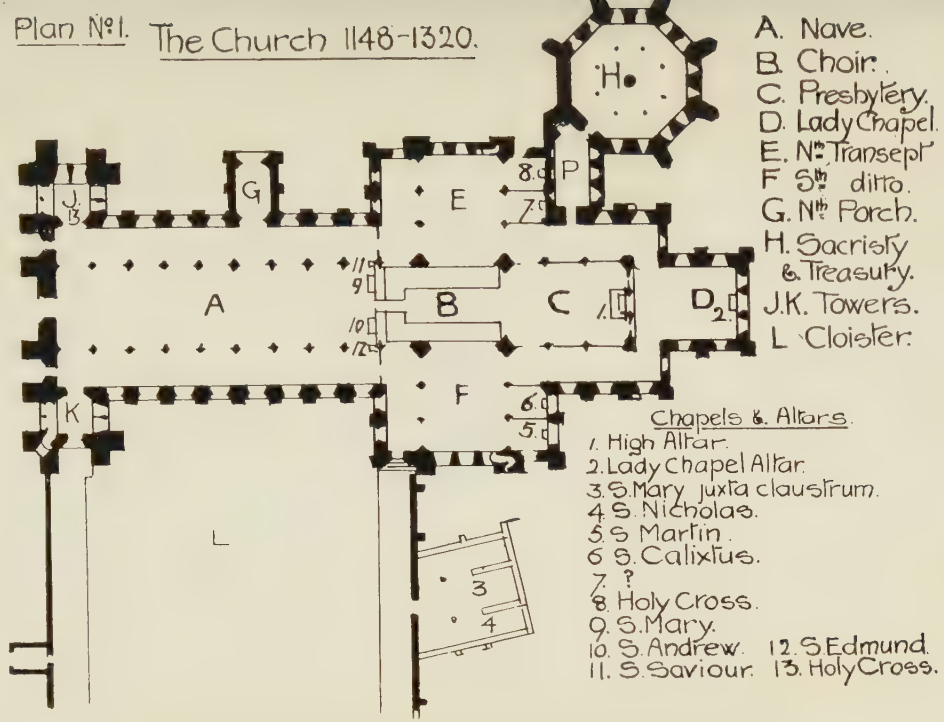
[1] This view was put forth by Mr. W. H. St. John Hope at the Bristol meeting of the Royal Archæological Institute in 1904.



WELLS CATHEDRAL—PLAN I.

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has left little mark on the fabric or the constitution of his diocese, except in his forcible attempt at curbing the independence of the monastic houses under his sway. He left the title of Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury for a few years to his successor.

Bishop Joscelin was the next builder; he succeeded to the episcopate in 1206, a unique instance in the roll of bishops of a native of Wells rising through all the grades and offices of the Church to the bishopric, living in Wells during the greater part of a long life, and dying there, buried among his own people. Soon after Joscelin's consecration at Reading on May 12th, 1206, he was swept into the current of civil strife, and was banished by John. He was abroad five years, and not until 1220 had he settled himself down at Wells for the remainder of his life. Then he devoted himself to the work of perfecting the church and cathedral system at Wells. Schools were founded, the palace was commenced, and the park was in course of formation; houses were provided for the canons resident, and the formation of the "Liberty" began. Between 1220 and 1242, Bishop Joscelin repaired, enlarged, completed, and consecrated the church anew.

The chapter registers, which have been published in late years, show conclusively that there were two chief builders of the church at Wells—Bishop Reginald de Bohun and Joscelin of Wells. They succeeded one another as bishops at an interval of fifteen years. But they were united in their lives and in their continuity of interest in the building which Joscelin, one of the canons of the church, and of Reginald's council, had helped to design in his earlier days, and completed in his own episcopate.

The west front and probably the last bays of the nave were the special portions of his building—the last bays in the style more like that of his predecessor, "transitional Norman," as it is called by Professor Willis; the west

front in the Early English style. The broad gallery of sculpture on the west front is the distinguishing glory of this earlier church of the thirteenth century, grand and solemn in design, wonderful in the grace and dignity and beautiful simplicity of execution at such an early period in the art of sculpture, surpassing the contemporary sculpture at home or abroad.

Here in one long line running from end to end of the broad front are figures of divers orders of God's servants standing each in their lot; here, again, are the figures of God's servants rising from the graves, looking upwards and about to stand before the court of heaven. There, above, in upper tiers are the angels and the Apostles at the feet of the Son of Man, Who is seated on the throne of judgment above all, high and lifted up.

In his long episcopate of thirty-six years, Joscelin had devoted himself to Wells, though living all the time in harmony with the chapter of Bath. It must have been apparent to the chapter of Bath that the church of Wells was becoming the more important diocesan centre, and that they were losing their place as the seat of the bishop.

The fatal blow at the primacy of Bath was struck when Bishop Joscelin, at his death, left his body to be buried in the church of Wells; and the tradition of a hundred and thirty-four years that the church of Bath was the burial place of the Bishops of the see was now invaded. Then the convent thought it time to make a bold attempt to recover their position by securing the election of a Bishop who would be devoted to their interests without the concurrence of the canons of Wells.

RECONSTRUCTION IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

During the first forty years after Joscelin's death no mention is made of work upon the fabric—1243 to 1286. If the registers of the Dean and Chapter are

silent as to the fabric, they are full of details as to the conflict that was going on for three years and more—1242-45—between the rival chapters for equal share in the election of a Bishop. We know the consequences of that conflict in the "intolerable debts" incurred by Wells in prosecuting their claims at the King's Court and in the Roman Chancellery. These debts weighed upon the church for long years; the fabric fund was completely absorbed; the common fund of the chapter was drained for years; and the incomes of individual prebendaries were largely devoted to relieve the church from its burdens and to make preparation for further building. Between 1263 and 1286 the registers are silent as to the fabric, but meanwhile the chapter were gathering funds from divers sources, and in the last-named year building was again resumed. Between 1286 and 1318 the Chapter House was built.

The chapter house was built to be the place of business, the meeting place and council chamber of the capitular body in its several grades of governors and governed, in which the rule and administration, the ordering of ritual, education, and discipline of the whole community of more than a hundred and fifty members was carried on. The building was the creation for the most part of the members of the chapter, and its rise to greatness was a sign and record of the rise and culmination to power of the capitular body. It is one of the best examples of a type which chiefly belongs to the thirteenth century, of octagonal shape, with a single pillar in the middle, from which all the ribs of the vaulting branch out in different directions. The floor rests on the groined roof and massive columns of the treasury chamber raised in Joscelin's time, from which an outer staircase, a noble flight of thirty-two steps, winds upward to the council chamber.

Here was the daily home and centre of the life of the community, where each and all held communion and

fellowship one with another, and with their brethren departed, "dead, dispersed, or changed and changing." Every morning, when the office of prime was over at nine o'clock, and before the chapter mass in the church, the choir and chapter passed in orderly procession up this ascent into the "House of the Chapter."

The business of the day was preceded by an office, the "Martyrology" or commemoration of the faithful departed; psalms were said, lessons read. The obits, or anniversaries of benefactors, were announced from the *pulpitum* in front of the President's stall, and the appointed services for day or week were read out. Then followed the business transactions—hearing of complaints, making of inquiries, passing of sentences, correcting of faults before the whole body—then, when the vicars and choristers had left, the private conference and acts of Dean and Chapter. This meeting day by day in the chapter house formed part of the common life of the cathedral body.

Dean John de Godelee, who had been elected by the chapter from the body of the prebendaries, was the great builder during his tenure of office, 1305-1333. During these years the chapter house was brought to completion; the central tower of the church was being raised and roofed in; the eastern Lady Chapel was being built, and was finished; the choir was being refurnished with new stalls; and preparations were being made for the prolongation of the church eastward and the junction of the old church with the new work of the Lady Chapel. How far this latter work had been carried out at his death we do not know with certainty, but if the beautiful eastern window of the choir can be said to be within the date of 1330, the eastern wall of the choir must have been raised within Dean Godelee's time. As the west front is the distinguishing feature of the church of the thirteenth century, so the east window of the new fourteenth century choir is pre-eminent for simplicity and

harmony and richness of colouring, for the force of character in the faces and the dignity of the stately figures in flowing mantles of green and ruby and gold, of Arab chieftains; such figures as some artist in the last crusading host under Edward might have seen in Eastern lands and designed as realistic portraitures of Bible characters.

In the reconstructed church the presbytery of the thirteenth century became the new choir, and the sanctuary was prolonged eastward under the newly-constructed vaulting, and brought into conjunction with the Lady Chapel by the open arcading under which the processional path passed round behind the reredos.

A remarkable characteristic of the church under these changes and reconstructions is the gradual and almost imperceptible transition of one style into another. Professor Willis has described the architecture of the church of the thirteenth century as "transitional Norman," and as "bearing a character unlike any Early English building." So, again, the Early English flows on easily into the Decorated in chapter house and in Lady Chapel, and now in this later reconstruction of the east end there is the like transition from the Decorated into the Perpendicular.

Finally, the screen was advanced eastward under the eastern arch of the central tower, and it now closed in the reconstructed choir, and separated it from the nave in divisions proportionate to the increased length of the church.

One notable feature in the interior construction of the church must be dated to this time, though there is no documentary evidence to fix definitely the years within which the work was going on, namely, the supporting of the central tower by the insertion of inverted arches within the tower arches on three sides, and by strengthening the piers west of the tower and in the transepts. Everyone is struck, perhaps offended at first sight, by this characteristic feature of the church of Wells: the eye becomes

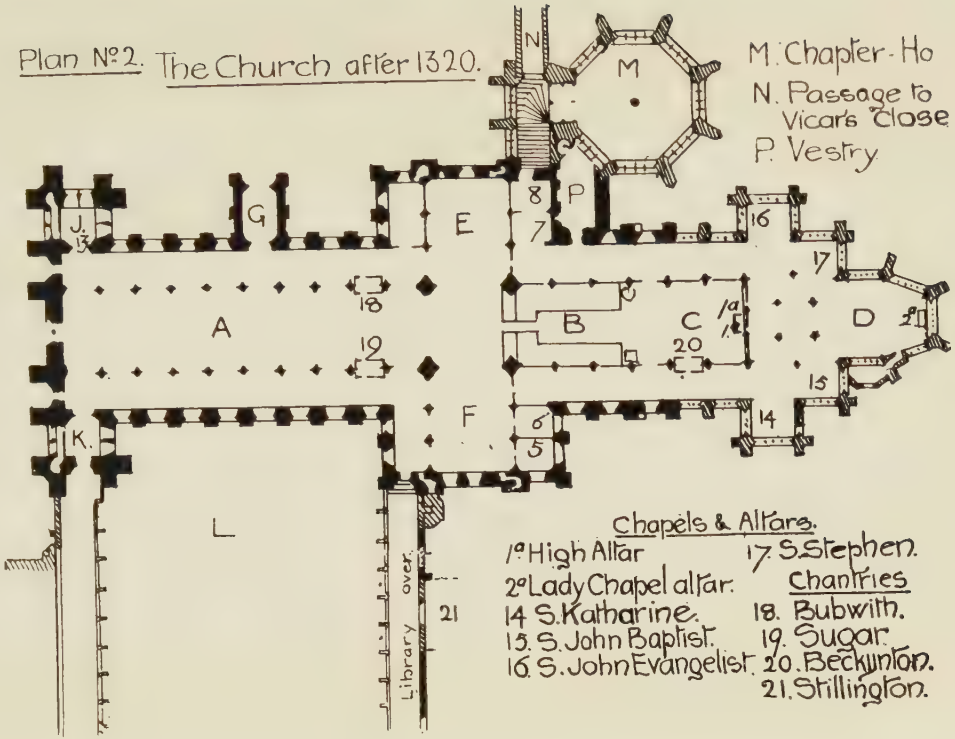
reconciled to its bold and almost grotesque simplicity; but the effect of the soaring arches of the tower would have been far more pleasing if, as Mr. Freeman said, the central lantern had not been forced to "lean on ungainly props."

Little now remained to complete the fabric of the church except the completion of the western towers. Though fifty years passed between the building of the two towers, there is little difference in their style.

Bishop Bubwith, in his will dated October, 1424, demised a sum of money for the construction of the "bell tower, or northern tower, at the west end of the church," to be perfected in a resemblance, as far as possible, to the southern tower called Harewell Tower, for which the money had been left by Bishop Harewell, 1386, and to be called and named after him "Bubbewith's Tower."

That north-west tower was built shortly after. In its western front are two canopied niches, in one of which is the figure of the Bishop in prayer, holding his pastoral staff, and underneath is a shield charged with his arms.

The completion of the "new work" and the reconstruction of the church during Bishop Ralph's episcopate, though in the main the work of Dean Godelee and his chapter, entitled the bishop to the honour of burial before the new high altar, as second founder or, rather, as finisher of the church, in 1363, and his beautiful alabaster tomb, which now lies in the northern aisle of the choir, at first was placed in the presbytery in front of the seat of the Bishop and before the high altar. Other great works have made memorable his episcopate: (*a*) the incorporation of the vicars choral, their endowment and settlement in the "Nova Clausa," "the Vicars' Close," which was begun in 1348, and gradually comprised a hall, a chapel, and houses in cloister-like row, for a body of upwards of fifty vicars. But the New Close was not completed for another century. The chapel was finished by Bishop Bubwith, 1407-1424, and the wooden ceiling and chamber



WELLS CATHEDRAL—PLAN II.

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above were added by Bishop Beckyngton, and it was not finished or consecrated until 1497. But year by year the College of Vicars still commemorate Bishop Ralph as their founder. (*b*) The embattlement of the Palace.

THE PALACE

While the eastern gable of the church and Lady Chapel were rising above the head of St. Andrew's spring, lower down on the southern side of the stream, embattled walls, with towers and portcullised gateway, were being built up on the banks of the moat, enclosing the princely hall and dwelling of the Bishop. This somewhat ostentatious display of feudal lordship may have given some occasion to an outbreak of popular revolt which for a time disturbed the peace of Wells. The palace had been the scene of a royal visit in the early years of Bishop Ralph's episcopate. The young King Edward III. had kept his court there from Christmas to Epiphany in 1332. Nine years afterwards, by a royal licence dated 14 Edward 1341, the bishop was empowered to "embattle" the precincts of the church and also of his own houses. The townspeople of Wells, with the growing spirit of independence of the times, had been seeking, and had lately obtained, a new charter, giving them more local freedom, and their own mayor and bailiffs. For this licence they had actually paid to the Crown £40 and more. But the charter was no sooner purchased than it was revoked, after a long inquisition in the King's Court lasting from January, 1342, to Michaelmas, 1343, on the ground that it was to the prejudice of the King, and had been unadvisedly granted. The disappointment of the citizens was aggravated by this licence to their mesne lord, their Bishop, to "embattle" his palace, the more so as by a clause in their charter they had hoped to be free of all services upon castles, walls, and all other works for the King throughout the realm.

In January, 1342, a conspiracy was formed in the town to resist payment of the ordinary dues to the Bishop's bailiff. The Bishop levied distresses, the conspirators effected a rescue, and disturbance of some kind went on. In May, 1343, a commission was issued to try the case, and in August, 1343, the judges gave judgment for the Bishop, with costs of £3,000 to the rebellious burghers. It does not appear whether the Bishop received the fine. The quarrel broke out again in after years, but the citizens obtained their charter in Henry IV.'s time, and finally and more fully in Queen Elizabeth's reign.[1]

The second decade in Bishop Ralph's episcopate was darkened by the cloud of the great pestilence, "the Black Death," which fell over the land in 1348 and 1349. This part of the country suffered less than some others; but the register of the Bishop, who was then at his manor house at Wiveliscombe, shows by the very large number of institutions at that time how great was the mortality among the clergy of the diocese.

The palace, now a moated fortress, surrounded by the stream of St. Andrew, has had four chief builders—bishops for their several periods, during two hundred and forty years. Joscelin of Wells and Robert Burnell of Acton Burnell, in Shropshire, in the thirteenth century, Ralph of Shrewsbury in the fourteenth century, and Thomas Bekynton in the fifteenth century, have left their mark there.

It was Joscelin, the "son of the soil," who had risen to the bishop's throne in the church of his home, who was the first builder on the southern bank of the stream. Royal grants from John early in his episcopate gave him the royal licence to enclose a park on the south side of the town, and he was stocking his park with deer from the forest of Cheddar at the same time that he was

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1 *Year Book of* 16 *Edward III.* (R. S.), where the whole case is legally set out by the Editor, L. O. Pike, Esq. (Introduction, p. xxxiv.).

building up the west front of the great church. Banished by John for publishing the Interdict, he nurtured his plans for church and palace in foreign lands. On his return he raised the vaulted halls of entrance and reception, and on the first floor the gallery and great chambers, solar, and oratory, which form the central block.

Next builder to Joscelin came the great statesman and Chancellor of Edward I., Robert Burnell, lord of Acton Burnell, 1275-1292. At the end of the thirteenth century there rose on the south side of Joscelin's buildings a great hall of state, rivalling the King's Hall at Westminster, of which the ruins of the four towers and the northern side remain to show the dimensions. This noble hall, worthy of a king's palace, was not in existence when Burnell's royal master, Edward, and his Queen Eleanor, kept their court at Glastonbury in 1277. But when Wells in turn was the scene of a royal visit from the third Edward, his grandson, in 1332, then, no doubt, the great hall and chapel in their fresh glories were the scene of stately ceremonies. It was the last of Dean Godelee's years, and he and the Chapter were able at the same time to exhibit to the royal guest the noble chapter house

> As rose of flowers fairest,
> A house of beauty rarest,

and the graceful Lady Chapel, just constructed on the northern side of St. Andrew's stream.

With Bishop Thomas Bekynton Wells has a more local and social interest. Born in a Somersetshire village, a boy at Winchester, and one of William of Wykeham's seventy scholars, then Fellow of New College and Canon of Wells, he rose under Wykeham's influence and by his own wits to higher places. He was secretary to the young King, Henry VI., and served on several diplomatic missions. His last service before the appointment to the bishopric of Bath and Wells was the delicate office of unsuccessfully negotiating a marriage between the young

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King, then twenty-one, and one of the daughters of the Count of Armagnac.

Next year, 1443, Bekynton was consecrated Bishop of Bath and Wells in the old collegiate Church of Eton on October 13th, and he celebrated his first pontifical mass in the new church, partly built, under a tent raised over the altar, where the foundation stone had been laid by the royal founder. Bekynton was intimately connected with the new college of Eton, which Henry was raising up on the model of Wykeham's foundation of Winchester, and Bekynton, himself a Wykehamist, aided the King by his knowledge and advice. Shortly before his consecration he had accompanied William Waynflete, then Provost of Eton, to Cambridge with the first detachment of King's Scholars.

Great works were carried on by Bekynton at the palace. He built, or rebuilt, the northern wing, and the gatehouse of the inner court, and a gatehouse in the outer court of entrance from the town, and other towers and gatehouses on each side of the cathedral green. Twelve houses in the market-place, outside the palace gate, were the "new works," which formed an instalment of a great design for a stately piazza, such as he may have seen in Italian cities, which was to adorn his town and make it a praise in the earth. His last act of beneficence was the perpetual gift to all generations of the "cup of cold water," perennially flowing from one of the springs of St. Andrew to the market-place of the citizens, with the sole condition annexed that they should commemorate their benefactor and pray for him at his grave on one day in the year.

There is a pathetic scene in his life when, on January 13th, 1452, at five p.m., he consecrated the altar on the south side of the sanctuary in the church of Wells, in honour of the Blessed Virgin and St. Thomas the Martyr, and two days after, in the robes in which he desired to be buried, he consecrated the place of his grave

on the south side of this altar, where, Godwin says, "a goodly tombe was built by himself in his lifetime."

A younger contemporary of the Bishop was Thomas Chaundler, a native of Wells, Scholar of Winchester, Fellow and then Warden of New College, Chancellor of Wells in 1452, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1461. From his letters and his books addressed to Bekynton, whom he delights to honour, we have glimpses of men and things in Wells at this time, which bring the Bishop and his friend before us. In one of his books is a drawing of a chamber in the palace. The Bishop is seated on a throne under a canopy with a jewelled mitre suspended over his head. His right hand is in the act of blessing. On his right stands his chaplain, with crosier in his left hand and a book or bag in his right; and kneeling before the Bishop is the author, Chaundler himself, in the act of presenting a book to his patron, and "with the book, himself and all that he has." The three heads are probably portraits, and that of Bekynton bears a resemblance to the effigy on his tomb.

Chaundler's book is a eulogy of his friend, Bishop Bekynton, and a dialogue on the comparative merits of Bath and Wells. Though extravagant in its terms, it has an interest as the loyal panegyric of one who saw the last great mediæval Bishop in his glory, and the description of Wells is the patriotic picture drawn by one of its own children. He is pointing out to a friend, who is a visitor from Oxford, the beauties of his native place—"the most lovely church of St. Andrew, where is the throne of the learned and munificent prelate, Thomas, first of the name; the palace, surrounded on all sides by flowing waters, and bulwarked by its coronet of battlemented walls and towers." He promises to introduce his friend to "the noble and facetious Dean," and to the Canons, all religious men, and very hospitable; he assures him he will find here well-mannered vicars, citizens living in concord with one another, and courteous to strangers, streets clean, houses

commodious, "for is not the city rightly called '*Wells*,' where fountains gush out in every part, which both make and beautify the city"?

The glory departed from the Palace for a long season after Bekynton's death. It was left uninhabited under his successor, Stillington, the political intriguer, a prisoner in Windsor Castle to the day of his death, though he made his grave in the memorial chapel at Wells which he had built in his life. Successive bishops who were King's secretaries and ambassadors for the most part lived elsewhere. In Edward's short reign the Palace was made over into the hands of the courtiers and the spoilers, and the bishop was thrust out. The house was left desolate during the troublous times of the seventeenth century. When the bishop entered upon his own again, after the Restoration, the state hall was a magnificent ruin. But the glory of the past still lingers around the strong walls and bulwarks on the banks of the flowing waters of the surrounding moat, and the Palace is hallowed by the memories of such saintly bishops of later date as Arthur Lake, like Gregory in his home on the Cælian hill, feeding twelve old men at his own table; and Thomas Ken, whose hymns, like the streams which issue forth from the fountain of St. Andrew, make glad the city of God, the dwelling-place of the Most High.

C. M. CHURCH.

ANCIENT STONE CROSSES

By Alex. Gordon

THE study of the old stone crosses of Somersetshire offers a rich field for the archæologist. Carrying the mind back as they do to the stirring times of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and to the still remoter periods of the eighth and ninth, they throw over it that peculiar glamour of romance inseparable from the associations of antiquities which tend to suggest the people's habits, customs, and modes of thought.

See yonder friar, with bared head and sandalled feet, as he stands on the well-worn steps of the cross on market day, haranguing the populace, now pointing, it may be, to the carven skull on the shaft above him, and moralising on the vanity of human life, and, anon, naïvely touching his alms purse, he descants to the people on the timely benefits likely to accrue to their souls by a liberal support of his particular religious house.

Or look upon this picture in the bloody times of Monmouth. Here hangs the victim of a double-dyed villain of a judge. For some simple kindly act to a persecuted Puritan this humble Somerset peasant has found his cross in very deed.

See this wayside column; at its base kneels the returning and, let us hope, repentant prodigal imploring silently the pardon and protection of his patron saint, St. John.

Or turn aside to this simple upright shaft, built across a flowing stream. Here the bewitched of evil spirits

could rest in peace, for running water was the demon's bane.

There are over two hundred old crosses in Somerset, but as many of them are the same in general appearance, especially fifteenth century work, I shall consider only a few typical examples, selected for their historic interest or artistic value.

It is worthy of notice that the south-west of England is remarkably rich in mediæval crosses in comparison with other parts of the country. Excepting the St. Eleanor crosses, there are probably no erections of this kind of any importance now remaining in the Midland, Eastern, and Northern counties.

The earliest relics of crosses found in Somerset are Saxon, and date back to the eighth century, and from that period till the earlier part of the sixteenth the wonderful series is continued. The rapid progress of religion and the consequent erection of many beautiful churches, especially in the fifteenth century, rendered the uses to which the crosses were often put obsolete.

The various crosses may be broadly classified thus:—

I.—The Market and Village Crosses.
II.—The Churchyard Crosses.
III.—The Wayside and Water Crosses.
IV.—The Manorial or Boundary Crosses.

I.—The Market and Village Crosses

The earliest market crosses were simple in shape, merely consisting of a pillar placed on steps. Later, they were of greater height, and had niches for sculptured figures. Later still, they were nearly always enclosed, forming a kind of penthouse (usually octagonally shaped), probably for climatical reasons, as at Glastonbury, Wells, Bridgwater, Somerton, Taunton, Chard, Milverton,

Shepton Mallet, Cheddar, Axbridge, Nether Stowey, Dunster, South Petherton, Banwell, and Bruton.

Occasionally in these inclosed crosses there is an overhead chamber, as at Milverton and Dunster. It is not clear what this was originally intended for. Where very small it may have been a muniment room, but being generally a result of the construction it was likely enough used simply as a storing place for market appurtenances.

These crosses, which were erected generally by the religious houses, served various purposes, but were chiefly for the collection of market dues and preaching from. In many cases by Royal edict the right of receiving the market tolls was granted to monastic bodies, particularly where markets or fairs were held within church territory. This levy augmented very substantially the monastic funds, and would amply repay the monks for the expense and care bestowed upon these erections. Sometimes they are called "Weeping" or "Penance" Crosses. It is said that for certain offences, mostly of a religious nature, persons had to walk to the cross barefooted and scantily clothed, and subjected also to other ignominious treatment.

Previous to 1285, markets were principally held in the churchyards on Sundays and holidays, perhaps for the double convenience of those worshippers who considered it a decided advantage to be able to combine religious and secular transactions. After this date, by Act of Parliament, markets were prohibited in churchyards, though they continued to be held on Sundays up till 1677.

It is important to remember that the preaching or begging friars who used these crosses constituted an ecclesiastical body quite distinct from the ordinary monks. The monasteries had grown exceedingly rich through grants of land, etc., and the monks and secular clergy were becoming lazy, useless, and effeminate. To rouse the Church from its lethargy, the friar or mendicant communities were formed. They did not live in seclusion like the monks, but intermingled freely with the people,

posing chiefly as itinerant preachers and alms-gatherers. They are said to have occasionally assisted in the practical decoration of the parish churches, and doubtless many of the quaint carvings on bench ends and elsewhere and some of the wall paintings have been executed by these wanderers, who were evidently not very particular what they turned their hands to.

Rapidly acquiring considerable power and quite eclipsing the secular clergy, the mendicant friars were exempted by the Popes from the observance of certain religious laws, and were granted the privilege of selling indulgences. These Dominicans, or Black Friars as they were also called, afterwards played an important part as the Pope's emissaries in the diabolical times of the Inquisition. They were introduced into England in 1221. Several other orders of friars came to this country, the principal being the Franciscans or Grey Friars, about 1224; the Carmelites, or White Friars, 1240; and the Augustinians in 1250. The latter dressed themselves completely in black. They had priories at Taunton, Stavordale, and Keynsham.

In South Brent Church, Somerset, there are some curious carved bench ends, said to have sarcastic reference to the greediness and other vices of certain begging friars from Glastonbury Abbey. The panels were placed in the church by the incumbent, who had been able to get the better of the abbot, who had taken it into his head that he ought to have the main share of the income of South Brent. The story is told in three panels, in the first of which the chief object is a fox in monastic garb holding a pastoral staff, and surrounded by geese and other birds. Three pigs gaze with respect upon the fox, and are supposed to have reference to questionable habits of the monks. In the lower portion two apes are busy attending to the roasting of a pig. In the second panel a change is indicated. The fox, stripped of his robes, sits with fettered hind legs, the geese, etc., evidently having

changed their minds with regard to that gentleman's pretensions. The lower part shows the fox in stocks guarded by an ape. The last of the series shows the fox hanged by the geese.

The lands at Brent belonged to the famous Abbey, and as it had a goodly range of wine cellars here, the friars used to come over from Glastonbury, which is only some twelve miles distant, especially about Christmas time, to enjoy themselves. There are grave suspicions that their education in the art of gluttony, and even worse, was very complete. According to Cromwell, however, Glastonbury was said to be particularly free from many of the errors generally attributed to the monks. His share in the dissolution of the monasteries would give him ample opportunity of forming correct views as to the habits and customs of their inmates. Dr. Layton says: "At Glastonbury the brethren be so straight kept that they cannot offend, but fain they would if they might, as they confess, and so the fault is not with them." Punishment was often administered near the cross, as is evidenced by stocks having been found placed close by, as at Horsington, Nether Stowey, and Meare, and sometimes the gallows also, the cross itself, especially in Judge Jeffreys' time, serving occasionally in place of the latter erection.

Some of the earlier market crosses were emblematical, as at Horsington, near Yeovil. This may have been to remind onlookers of the fleetness of life, and to inculcate honest dealings in their business relationships.

THE VILLAGE CROSSES

These might almost be considered as market crosses, and I have classed them with these, although the latter term applies more to crosses in market towns than to those in the smaller country villages, but the distinction cannot be very closely adhered to. The village cross would naturally be an object of interest to the inhabitants.

It would serve devotional purposes, and be the meeting-place for discussing matters of civil and religious import. Proclamations of importance were made there.

. . . . . .

I shall now give some brief notes in reference to the illustrations.

Glastonbury (fig. 1).—What a charm there is about this old-world Somerset town, with its fascinating legendary lore stretching far back into the dim vista of

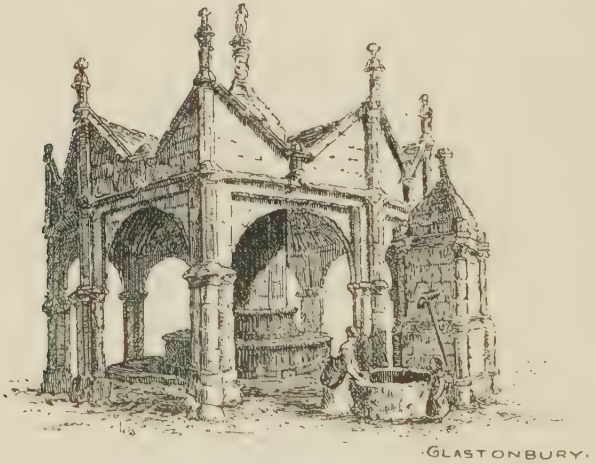

FIG. 1.

the past. The abbey, of course, is the chief attraction, although there are remains of other buildings of considerable interest. The old market cross, however, as shown in fig. 1, is not now in existence, and very little is known concerning it. It had quite an ecclesiastical look, which naturally associated it with the Abbey. It may be taken as a full development of the market cross, approaching more to the character of a house than a mere enclosure.

Britton says that in 1802 there was a mutilated

inscription on it, with the date 1604, but is not sure whether this alludes to the time of erection. There were also some armorial bearings carved on different parts, including those of Richard Bere, the last Abbot but one (of Glastonbury), who died 1524. The lower step was benched so that it could be used as a seat. Built into the wall of a house near the market may be seen a piece of stone carving consisting of two figures—a man and woman clasping hands, which tradition says formed part

FIG. 2.

of the original cross, but there is no direct proof of this. It was certainly a picturesque building, though perhaps not in the finest architectural taste. It stood at the bottom of High Street, and was removed in 1808, along with a fountain or conduit (see drawings), which stood adjacent to it. The present cross was built in 1846, and occupies the same site as the old, but has no surrounding arcade.

Cheddar (fig. 2).—The cross still exists, but has undergone considerable repair. The shaft, or central

column, is much earlier than the other parts, and is probably of the fifteenth century. This cross is noticeable for having two plans, the socket being octagonal, and the steps and roof hexagonal. The shaft goes through the roof, and has a kind of finial formed by four busts of monks with scrolls. There are peculiar grotesque gargoyles at the weather-string angles. Formerly a large market was held here, and Cheddar is still interesting on account of the immense quantities of its famous cheese made in the district.

FIG. 3.

Taunton (fig. 3).—This cross, which was demolished in 1780, could lay little claim to the artistic, but is interesting historically as being the spot where the ill-fated Monmouth was proclaimed king. It was built in the fifteenth century, but the roofed arcade belonged to a later period. The base was benched, and there was a sundial and weathercock, erected probably by one of the Bishops of Winchester. The present market cross was built in 1867, but has no arcade. It is of interest to notice that the country folks on Saturday (market day) congregate about the cross, and transact their business very much as in bygone times. Not far from the present erection was the Old Angel Inn, where Jeffreys stayed when on his bloody circuit. He is said to have sat at an upper window, facing the market arcades (still remaining), and gloated over the agonies of the poor

wretches hanging from the tie beams, and who had previously been sentenced by him at the Taunton Castle Hall.

Dunster (fig. 4).—This market cross, or "Yarn Market," as it is sometimes called, still remains. It is a very picturesque building, indeed, and would form an excellent subject for the artist. It is octagonal in shape, and was built by George Luttrell, Sheriff of the county, about 1600. There is a weather vane, with the date 1647, and

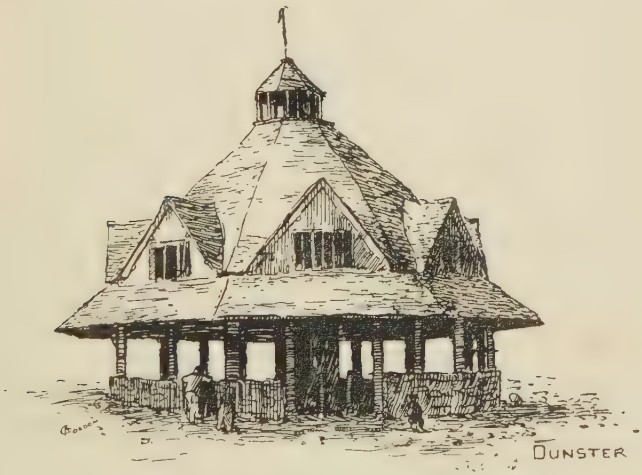

FIG. 4.

initials G L, but these refer to a grandson of the builder. The arrangement of the timbers extending radially from the centre of the cross is somewhat remarkable. One of these has been pierced by a cannon ball, shot from Dunster Castle during a siege. The cross was used chiefly as a yarn market, Dunster at one time being famous for its "Kersey" cloths or "Dunsters." Dunster is a quaint old-fashioned, typical Somerset village, and affords excellent scope for the antiquary or artist. Unlike many of the country villages, it is easily reached by rail.

Horsington (fig. 5).—This is a good example of an unenclosed market cross. It is thirteenth century work. As seen in the illustration, it has a calvary of four circular steps, the shaft resting on a three-feet square base. The pillar is a monolith of Ham Hill stone. On one face of

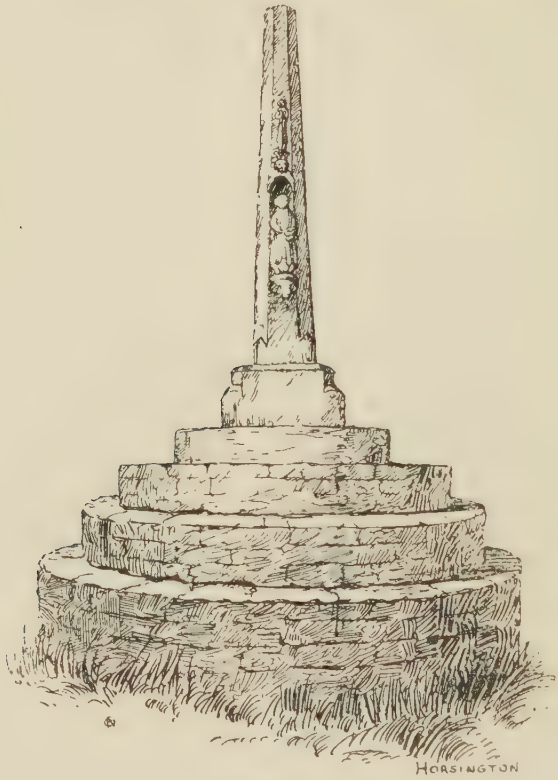

FIG. 5.

the shaft is sculptured the figure of a friar, probably Franciscan; above this, a canopy with a skull surmounted by a crown Over this again is what appears to be a leg bone supporting a second skull. Beneath the figure is a bracket, shaped like a ram's head.

It is difficult to say what was the object of these emblems of life's brevity, but in pointing a moral they would probably do good service in the religious declamations of the preaching friar.

Before referring to the illustrations of village crosses, a few remarks on some market crosses not illustrated may be of interest.

Wells.—In reference to the former cross here, Leland says: "Wyllyam Knight, now Bishop of Bath, buildeth his crosse in the market place, a right sumptuous Peace of worke; in the Extreme Circumference whereof be vij faire Pillers and in another Circumference withyn them be vi Pillers and yn the midle of this circumference one Piller. Al these shaul bere a volte, and over the volte shaul be Domus Civica. This work was made by the Legacie of Doctor Wolman, Deane of Welles, 1542." According to municipal records of Wells, proclamations were always made at the Cross. Bishop Knight's will notified that the tolls of the Market Cross were to be for the benefit of the choristers of the Cathedral Church of Wells for ever. It was taken down in 1785. It had something of the general style of Cheddar, only richer and more magnificent, as befitted a building closely associated with dignitaries of the Church.

Somerton.—This cross still exists, and was built about 1670. It has three steps benched, and curious gargoyles at the weather-string angles. Generally, it is not unlike Cheddar, though it differs in the roof.

Shepton Mallet.—A very interesting cross still remaining. It was restored in 1841. On a brass plate affixed to one of the piers the following inscription was placed by the founders:—"Of your Charitye pray for the soules of Walter Buckland and Agnys hys wyff wh whoys goods this crosse was made the yere of our Lord God, MD., whoys obytt shall be kepte for ever in the parishe church of Shepton Mallett, ye xxviii day of November, on whoys

soules Jhu pardon." There is a house here in which tradition says Monmouth stayed in 1685.

Bruton.—Referring to the Market Cross not now in existence, Leland says: "Ther is in the market place of the Toun a new Crosse of six arches, and a piller yn the middle for market folkes to stande yn, begon and brought up to fornix by Ely, last Abbate of Brutun, A.D. 1533." It was said to have been destroyed in 1790, but very little is known concerning it. There is an old house here (with coats of arms), supposed to have been the residence of Abbot Ely.

Bridgwater.—The High Cross or Market Cross here was existing in 1730. It is said that on one of the piers was the useful advice: "Mind your own business." The Duke of Monmouth was here proclaimed King in 1685 by the Mayor of Bridgwater. It was removed in 1820. In this district is the marsh of Sedgmoor, where the famous battle was fought.

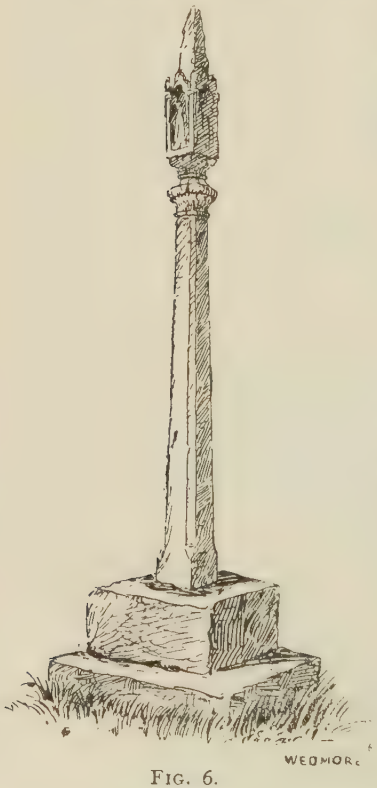

FIG. 6.

Milverton. — This was called the "Fair Cross." It was an ordinary covered-in market cross with an overhead chamber. It was private property, having been granted along with the rights of toll, and it is remarkable that in its descent from owner to owner these rights still adhered. Taken down about 1850.

Nether Stowey.—This was rather curious on account of

its being in its way a real detached campanile. There was a turret with a bell which was rung before divine worship, so that parishioners who lived far from church might hear the summons.

Chard.—The cross was very much like the general type. Chard had hard times of it after the Monmouth rebellion, many persons being hung here, and the borough was also heavily taxed for its opposition principles.

Wedmore (fig. 6).—This village cross, which still exists, is one of the rare canopied structures of which only some four remain. It is of graceful proportions, and fortunately almost complete. The canopy is sculptured on four sides. There are the Holy Rood, the figures of Mary and John, the Virgin and Holy Child, an ecclesiastical figure with pastoral staff, and an armoured figure. The manor of Wedmore was given by Wilfrid, Archbishop of York, to the Abbey of Glastonbury, and probably the figure with staff may be intended for him, it being no uncommon thing to perpetuate the memory of a liberal benefactor. It is late fourteenth century work, and is not in its original position. Some parts of the base appear to be restorations. Tradition says Jeffreys used this cross on one occasion as a gallows, causing a doctor to be hung for attending a wounded Puritan belonging to Monmouth's army. The house in front of which the cross is placed is said to be where the judge lodged while in this district on his terrible circuit.

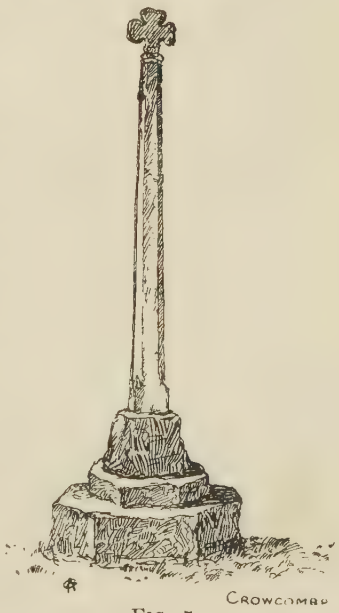

FIG. 7.

Crowcombe (fig. 7).—Another graceful village cross of

the fourteenth century, though simpler than that of Wedmore. The steps and socket are much worn. The shaft is finished with a Greek cross. It is situated in the middle of the roadway at the entrance to the quaint little village of Crowcombe, which nestles so prettily at the base of the Quantock hills.

Among the many village crosses mention may be made of Meare, where the lower step formed a seat for delinquents placed in the stocks; Congresbury, with a cross about forty feet high; and Croscombe, to which a certain amount of interest is attached on account of the spirited manner in which the villagers some twenty or thirty years ago opposed its demolition.

II.—THE CHURCHYARD CROSSES

THESE form a most interesting series. It is uncertain to what purposes they were originally put, as there are but scanty records of these relics of the past; which may be owing to the fact that many of the crosses were erected from the ever-increasing funds of the monasteries, and were, consequently, so common that no particular note seems to have been taken of them. They may have had some connection with the markets held in the churchyards, possibly for the collection of dues. Perhaps they served as pulpits for preaching from, the conducting of funeral services, and other devotional purposes.

The most likely view, it seems to me, is that these crosses were very often simply intended as monuments to perpetuate the memory of special benefactors of the Church, or other persons of note. This idea is readily suggested by the sculptured figures often found niched in the shaft, as at Wiveliscombe (fig. 15), or forming a finial, as at Crowcombe, etc. They may also have been used chiefly at the Thanksgiving processions as one of the places for conducting a certain portion of the ritual. No doubt they were sometimes intended to indicate

the consecration of the place, and occasionally, as at Sutton Bingham (fig. 18), they were sepulchral.

FIG. 8.—Fragment of Saxon Cross at Rowberrow.

According to William of Malmesbury, there used to be at Glastonbury several churchyard crosses, which he believed to be sepulchral and erected probably in the eighth century.

Early crosses likely enough had their origin in the dedication of Pagan monuments to Christian uses, when the idolatrous worship accorded to stones standing upright would give place to the more spiritual views of the Christian, who adopted them as memorials of the faith and hope of the departed.

Judging from the subjects of many of the carvings (the Holy Rood, the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, etc.), especially on the canopied crosses (fig. 10), they were evidently intended to create or foster a devotional

FIG. 9.—Fragment of Saxon Cross-shaft at Kelston.

spirit in the minds of the onlookers. They were often placed near the church door, so as to attract notice from the passer-by, or to be convenient at the Thanksgiving processions after Easter.

Our forefathers were not at all particular as to what they did in the churchyards—rustic games, drinking, and cock-fighting being vigorously carried on. Manorial courts were held there, and, as already mentioned, markets also.

The ornament on the earlier examples was often very intricate and beautiful, and of a symbolical character, as at Rowberrow (fig. 8), Kelston (fig. 9), West Camel, etc.

Referring to the illustrations of Churchyard Crosses, the following classification, according to probable date, may be useful:—

Rowberrow	Ninth to eleventh century
Kelston	Ninth to eleventh century
Harptree	Twelfth century
Chilton Trinity, Dunster	Early thirteenth century
Broomfield	Late thirteenth century
Williton, Wiveliscombe	Early fourteenth century
Bishops-Lydeard, Chewton Mendip	Late fourteenth century
Sutton Bingham	Fourteenth century
Wraxall	Late fifteenth century

Rowberrow (fig. 8).—This stone, which seems to be part of the arm or shaft of a cross, is built into the outer wall of the church porch. It is an excellent example of early Saxon work. The interlacing of the serpent, which is common at this period, may have had some mystic symbolical meaning in reference to the mythology of the old Scandinavians or the Celts. The double beading of the bands, another feature of Saxon work, is carried throughout the reptile's entire length. From a decorative

point of view the panel is fairly well filled, though the graduation in size is too sudden to be pleasing. The size of the stone is 1 ft. 5 ins. by 1 ft. 1 in., and the complete length of the serpent is 18 ft.

There is another fragment of a Saxon cross, supposed to be of still earlier date than Rowberrow, in the museum of the Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, Bath. Its shape as part of the head of a cross is more evident than

FIG. 10.—Head of Cross at West Harptree.

in the case of the one at Rowberrow, but the ornament is simpler and more artistic, consisting of the interlacing triquetra knot. At West Camel there is also some early interlacing work, not unlike that at Bath, but more elaborate. It is supposed that these Saxon crosses were placed chiefly at the heads of graves, much the same as in modern times, and they were not surmounted by canopied tops as in the crosses of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Kelston (fig. 9).—This fragment of later Saxon work affords an interesting example of early symbolism, the foliage springing from a stepped base like that of a cross, being probably typical of the Tree of Life. The elaborate interlacing of the foliage is a somewhat rare feature in Saxon work, although common enough in Norman sculpture. The ornament is well distributed, and the usual Saxon rope or cable moulding divides the upper and lower panels, and there are also traces of its having passed round the edge.

Harptree, West (fig. 10).—The drawings show the front and back views of the head of a cross found built into the wall of a cottage at this village. The figures in

FIG. 11.—Base of Cross at Chilton Trinity.

the front represent the Holy Rood, with Mary and John. The feet of Christ are crossed in such a manner as to be secured by one nail, and on His head is the crown of thorns. The spear mark on His right side is to be distinctly seen. The figure of St. John is habited in alb and cope, and apparently the arms are crossed. The back view shows the Virgin and Child and another figure kneeling in adoration, which may be intended for St. John. There are traces of reddish colouring to be seen. The stone is of blue lias, and is in a remarkably good state of preservation. It should be noticed that the background to the figures is solid, instead of being pierced right through, as in the cases of the relics from Charlton Horethorn and Tellisford. These two stones, as well as

the head of the Harptree cross, are now in Taunton Museum. The size of the Harptree stone is 2 ft. 4 ins. high and 6 ins. thick.

Chilton Trinity (fig. 11).—This cross is interesting on account of its round base, which is characteristic of early thirteenth century work. The holes shown on top of socket may have been for supporting sculptured figures of saints.

Dunster (fig. 12).—This is another example of the thirteenth century, the calvary or steps, however, being

FIG. 12.—Cross at Dunster.

of a more decided character than at Chilton Trinity, and possibly a little later.

There is a most interesting double church here. The choir belonged to the monks, and was spoken of as the "Priory church"; the nave belonged to the people, and was called the "Parish church." On the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII. in the sixteenth century, this church, not being entirely monastic, did not suffer like many others. The people's part was never interfered with. This is the reason why one part of a church might be destroyed and the other left complete, as at Malmesbury, Waltham, etc. At Dunster both portions are in

good preservation, but, as usual, the parish portion has been better cared for.

Broomfield (fig. 13).—Another example of thirteenth century work, but much later—possibly even fourteenth century. It is more graceful and richer in appearance than the cross at Dunster. It has a square graduated shaft, some ten feet high, formed of one stone, and with a bead moulding at each of the chamfered edges. The socket is square, with bold and decided broaches, which mark it as belonging to the later part of the century. It is placed a few yards from the porch. The church here is beautifully situated, and contains some remarkably fine bench-ends.

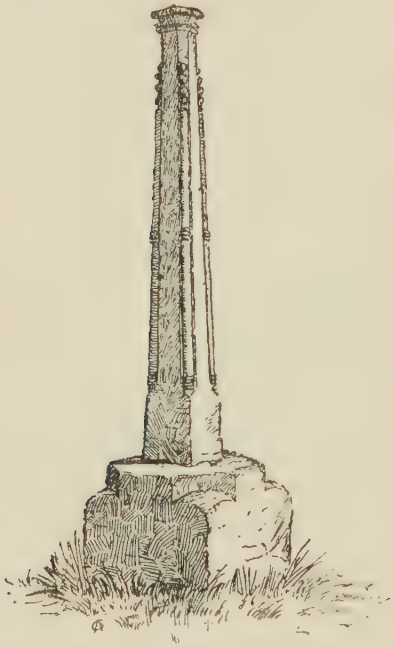

FIG. 13.—Cross at Broomfield.

Williton (fig. 14).—Here we have the very deeply broached chamfers, so characteristic of fourteenth century work. It has no other point of interest.

Wiveliscombe (fig. 15.)—This cross is evidently memorial, as there is a sculptured figure on one of the faces—probably in memory of Bishop Drokenford of Wells, who built the monastic palace, of which part still remains near the church. Wiveliscombe is said to have taken its name from the celibate habits of the monks—the "wiveless combe." The Celtic *Cwm* or "Combe," a valley, is a common affix in the west.

Bishops-Lydeard (fig. 16).—This is one of the finest examples of late fourteenth century work. As seen in

the illustration, it has a calvary of three octagonal steps, the mouldings indicating the date. The socket is also octagonal, each of its eight faces being decorated with sculptured figures. The east panel contains a seated figure of our Lord and winged lion. A scroll twisted about on either side may symbolise "The Word." The west panel gives a mediæval treatment of Christ's Resurrection. The other six faces contain the Twelve Apostles, two in each panel. Some of the figures are

FIG. 14.—Cross at Williton.

FIG. 15.—Cross at Wiveliscombe.

sufficiently characteristic to denote the particular persons they represent, *e.g.*, St. Peter with the keys. Near the

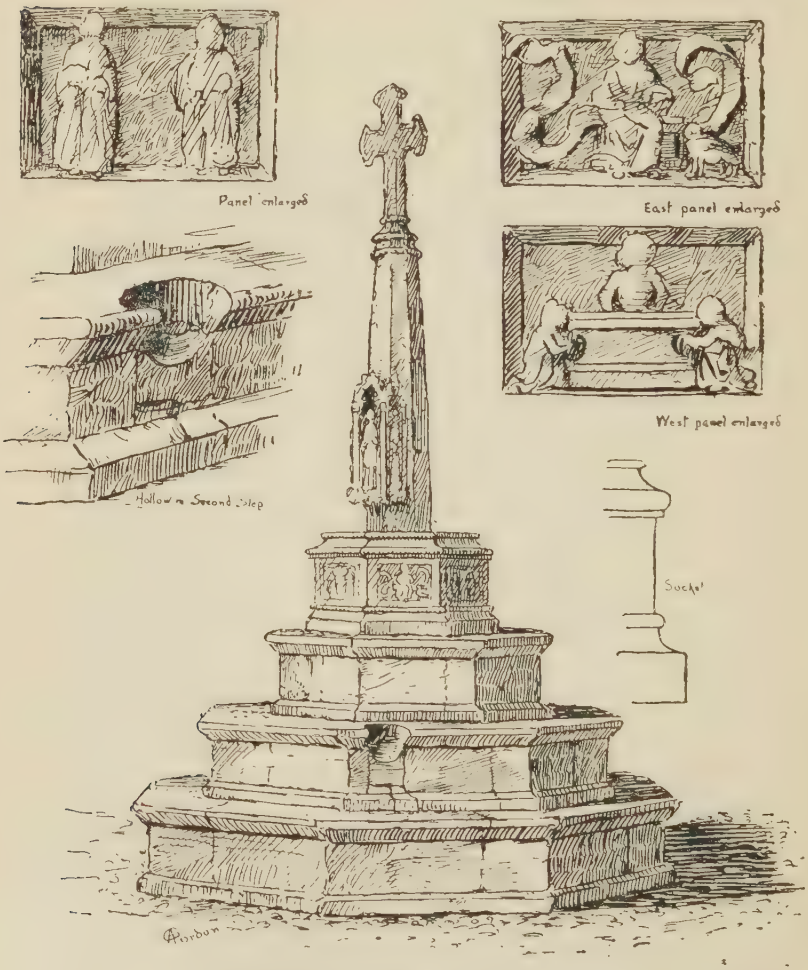

FIG. 16.—Cross at Bishops-Lydeard.

base of the shaft is a canopied projection with three figures in niches, one in front and one at each side. The figure

in front holds a cross, and is perhaps intended for St. John the Baptist. It is not known what the side figures are intended for, but as the Bishop of Sherborne at one time owned the manor lands, one may have been placed there to his memory. The cross at top of column is modern. A most remarkable feature occurs in the second step of

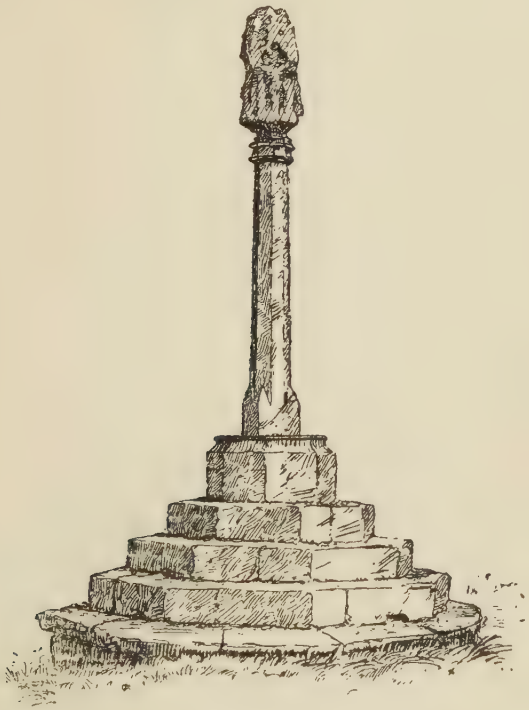

FIG. 17.—Cross at Chewton Mendip.

the calvary, viz., a cavity or hollow, some 1 ft. 4 ins. wide and 8 ins. deep. It is not at all clear what this was intended for. The late Mr. Pooley, in his book on the *Somersetshire Crosses*, thinks it was for the reception of thank-offerings. At King's Weston, Gloucestershire, I believe there is, or was, a cross to which sailors paid

homage on their way up and down the Severn, or made thanksgiving at after a long voyage. It had a cavity, intended for the reception of contributions from those who believed they had received benefit from it. I think it is more likely that the Bishops-Lydeard cavity had been used as a kind of baptismal font or receptacle for holy water. It may have been a penitential cross, and water in the hollow possibly may have played a part in the expiatory

FIG. 18.—Cross at Sutton Bingham.

devotions. It is situated several hundred yards from the church, and seems to be in its original position. Altogether, this is an extremely interesting churchyard cross, and some few miles distant, at Crowcombe, there is another which, though simpler, is well worth careful attention.

Chewton Mendip (fig. 17).—Here we have one of the very rare canopied crosses, of which I think there are

only some three or four remaining. Each side of the top contains figures much defaced. The west side has the Holy Rood, St. Mary, and St. John. On the east there are three figures, one larger than the others; one of them kneeling and looking upwards. The north side

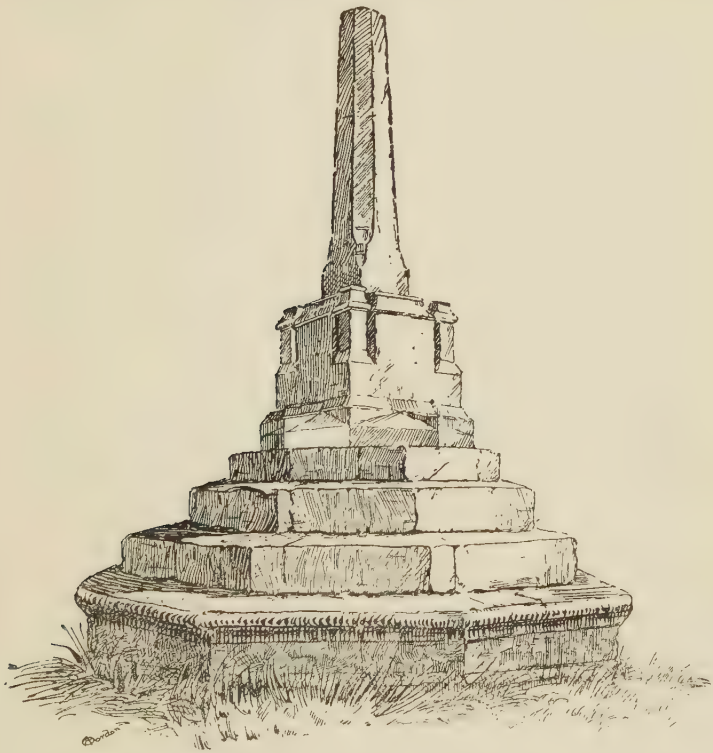

FIG. 19.—Cross at Wraxall.

contains a figure with a crown, and on the south there is a person holding a staff. Possibly this last figure is in memory of one of the Benedictines.

Sutton Bingham (fig. 18).—An example of the extremely rare sepulchral crosses. So far, I have been

unable to discover another in Somerset. The socket is very small, and not in proportion to the shaft, which is one stone, about 9 ft. high. The capital has shields arranged round the faces. The finial cross has been destroyed. There is not the slightest clue as to whose tomb it covers, but probably it may be that of some member of one of the old parish families. The church here is said to be the oldest in Somerset, and is supposed to have been built in 1111.

Wraxall (fig. 19).—This is a very gracefully proportioned cross. The lower step only is benched, and may have been used as a seat. All churchyard crosses must have been useful as resting places. The socket is somewhat unusual, on account of the projecting triangular portions at its base. These have holes, probably for containing supports for sculptured work. The treatment of the corners of the socket is not particularly uncommon. The shaft is monolithic.

There are also good examples of churchyard crosses at Spaxton, Stringston, Montacute, West Pennard, Crowcombe, Barton St. David, Walton, North Petherton, Ruishton, and some other places.

III.—THE WAYSIDE AND WATER CROSSES

The wayside crosses are not so numerous as those in the churchyards, but a few still remain. They were usually placed not far from the village, and where several roads met. In a publication of 1496, we find the following: "For thys reason ben crosses by ye waye that whan folke passyinge see ye croysses they shoulde thynke on Hym that deyed on ye croysse above al thynge." In another, "Quersoever a cross standeth there is forgiveness of payne." As in Brittany, they may have been for devotional purposes chiefly. They indicated the spots where Thanksgiving processions, now very rare, stopped, probably for repeating Psalms ciii. and civ., which had

to be said in course of the perambulation. These rounds took place on Rogation Sunday, the fifth after Easter.

They were in some cases memorial, and might have been erected to mark where the remains of some dignitary had been momentarily deposited on the way to their last resting-place in the village churchyard, so that those attending could rest and pray.

The wayside crosses might also have been aids to

FIG. 20.—Cross at Dunster.

religious reflection in the minds of the wayfarers. It is said that the richer pilgrims used to leave alms on these wayside crosses for the use of the poorer pilgrims following. Sometimes, as in the case of the market and village crosses, they may have been used as weeping crosses—a custom probably derived from the ancient Jews —or for penitential purposes, a custom existent in England up to the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Certain crosses also were recognised, like the altars in Biblical

times, as places of refuge for those who wished to claim the right of sanctuary.

In Cornwall they were often used as guide-stones across the wild moors.

Dunster (fig. 20).—This is a good example of a fourteenth century wayside cross. There is nothing remarkable about it, except the holes in the shaft, which were most likely intended for the image of some favourite saint to be affixed, such as St. John, St. Margaret, or St. Catherine, for the adoration of wayfaring devotees.

FIG. 21.—Cross at Doniford.

Other interesting wayside columns may be seen at Stoughton, Compton Dundon, Meare, Congresbury, etc.

The Water Crosses are very rare. It is difficult to conjecture why these were built near or over streams; but as in bygone days running water was supposed to have certain virtues in the way of repelling evil spirits, etc., these crosses may have been erected under superstitious influences. Probably, however, some local explanation would account for their position. It is likely enough they were simply memorial.

Doniford (fig. 21).—This fourteenth century water

cross (as its name to some extent implies) is on the edge of the public roadway, and is carefully built over a conduit passing right across and underneath the road. There are dowell holes on the upper surface of socket, which might suggest devotional uses. I have been unable to obtain locally the slightest information as to this cross.

I understand there was another water cross at Court de Wyck, the place where it stood being at the present time named "Streams Cross."

So far, I am not aware of any more Water Crosses in Somersetshire.

IV.—THE MANORIAL OR BOUNDARY CROSSES

These are occasionally met with, and are usually very simple. They were used as march-marks to indicate the divisions of Church or other lands. Crosses, as landmarks, are mentioned as early as A.D. 528. The Templars and Hospitallers used them for this purpose, as it was considered that the form of the Cross would inspire a certain respect, and thus prevent its removal. The term "Stump Cross" was applied to many crosses used for boundary marks.

Brendon (fig. 22).—This thirteenth century manorial cross, called also "Raleigh's Cross," is situated on the top

FIG. 22.—Cross at Brendon.

of the Brendon hills, near Watchet. It is the landmark dividing the manors of Nettlecombe, owned in the time

of Edward I. by the Raleighs, and Clatworthy, now the properties of Trevelyan and Carew. The cross was erected during the Raleighs' time; the hill at that time being quite uncultivated, and traversed only by pack-horses from Bampton to Watchet. Traces of this pack-road can still be seen. The cross was originally placed close to the edge of a bog, as a danger mark to travellers to keep south of it. Parts of the bog are still traceable. It was removed to its present position some seventy years ago by Sir Walter Trevelyan, to stand as the boundary stone dividing the two properties of Trevelyan and Carew.

Tradition says there was also another cross at Kingweston, near Sŏmerton. It probably marked the boundary of the lands of the Abbot of Bermondsey.

In conclusion, I think it is much to be regretted that many of the old crosses have disappeared. They were badly treated in the days of the Puritans, and unfortunately, by Act of Parliament, in 1644, many were entirely destroyed, and since then our modern village iconoclasts have contributed a certain, though possibly small, share in the work of destruction.

Some restorations have been attempted, but generally with but poor success, it being impossible so far to revive the mediæval spirit as to make the new work harmonise with the old. Repair, not restore, should be kept in mind.

It is also tantalising to see the ignoble uses to which these historic stones are sometimes put in these later days. Crosses may occasionally be seen freely decorated with placards, setting forth the merits of Mr. So and So's Cough Mixture or Somebody and Co.'s thirty shilling suits. *Sic transit, etc.*

I trust that these lines, though of a somewhat sketchy nature, may have helped to give a greater interest in, and a desire for deeper study of, the Ancient Stone Crosses of Somerset.

ALEX. GORDON.

KING ALFRED AND THE DANES

By the Rev. Chas. W. Whistler, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.

WE claim the great Alfred as a Somerset man with very good reason, and with documentary evidence to back our claim, if it were needed. That, however, can hardly be when the very mention of King Alfred in Somerset must recall the time when, at a turning point in our history, the hope of all England lay in his safety in our fenland, and built on what might come from the gathering of our Somerset thanes and freemen there to him in Athelney. It is not too much to say that the victory which ended that suspense was in a great measure due to the fact that in the heart of Somerset Alfred was at home, on lands which he knew as only a Somerset man could know them, and among men with whom he had been familiar from his boyhood. The words chronicled of the days in Athelney by Ethelwerd, his kinsman—"only the province of Somerset was with him: none others helped him"—mean more than a record of abandonment. Alfred was with his own men when no others could dare to try to reach him.

The connection of the royal family of Wessex with Somerset, and more particularly with the western portion, was very old, and in itself forms a chapter of our early history. It dates from the conquest of the old Roman province of Damnonia by the advancing West Saxons, and it is possible to trace in the positions of the manors disposed of by Alfred in his will, by consent of the Wessex Witan, the successive stages of that advance. He was,

perhaps, the largest owner of West Somerset manors, while almost a quarter of his whole property lay in the county, twelve or thirteen out of some fifty manors throughout his kingdom which his will mentions being within our boundaries.

On the line of the river Brue, between it and the western slope of the Mendips, he held Cheddar, Chewton and Burnham, with a royal residence on his manor at Wedmore. Kenwalch had won that land when he drove the British beyond the Parrett and into the Quantock country in 658, after the battle at Pen Selwood. Across the Parrett, in the Quantock country itself, he owned Cannington, North Newton (close to Athelney), and Chilton on the east of the hills, with probably, as the modern form of the name "Cantuctune" would seem to indicate, a house at the first-named place. On the west of the Quantocks he held Carhampton and Watchet, with a "palace" at Bossington, by Porlock; and these had been won in 682 by Kentwine, when he "drove the Welsh to the sea," and set his thanes in possession in their place.

Besides these, he owned Hardington and Litton and Adrington, in the east of the county; and Crewkerne and Milborne, in the south-west, adjacent to his three manors in West Dorset and five in Devon, with a "palace" at Somerton and another at South Petherton, unless that built there by Ina was the fair house destroyed by the queen in order to shew her husband the vanity of earthly comfort. So far as our county is concerned, the tale of Saxon advance is completed by these last-named manors. They had been won by Ina when he defeated Gerent of Damnonia in 710, and extended the lands of Somerset to their present limits.

From his earliest days, therefore, Alfred knew Somerset well. With his father and brothers he must needs have gone on their slow progresses from manor to manor, in the ancient way of close personal administration of the

realm by the king of those days; and on those manors he would have stayed for the Quantock hunting seasons or to see to the forestry and right tillage of his father's lands. He was the youngest son, hardly above a thane in rank, and with at one time seemingly little chance of ever succeeding to the throne and ancient royal lands. Some of those manors we have named were his own, moreover, and the life of a Saxon Atheling was by no means all confined to the palace. Even the king himself was wont personally to oversee the husbandry on his farms.

So in the days of peace Alfred grew familiar with Somerset. He had to know it, almost mile by mile, presently, in the stress of warfare. Before that time came, too, the first battlefield of which he heard would have been that at the Parrett mouth, on his own lands under Brent Knoll, most likely, on what is to-day called "Battle Borough," not far from Burnham. There Ealhstan, Bishop of Sherborne, had defeated, at the head of the Dorset and Somerset levies, a landing of the Danes; and with that early friend and teacher Alfred may have learned lessons in the art of war which he never forgot as they rode together across that lately-stricken field or over the not-yet-forgotten battleplaces on which Kentwine and Ina had won the inheritance which was to be his.

For those fair Somerset lands he had to fight even before they came into his hands on the death of his brother, at whose side he fought in the nine battles of the year of his accession, 871, meeting and checking in them the most determined attack on Wessex which had yet befallen. The three terrible "sons of Lodbrok"—Ingvar, Halfden, and Hubba—with their allied "host kings" and lesser chiefs, had already won all England north of the Thames, and only Wessex remained in arms against them. It seems certain that these brothers had definitely planned the partition of the whole realm between them, Halfden having actually taken Northumbria, and

Ingvar East Anglia and the overlordship of Mercia as their shares, while Wessex remained to be won for Hubba.

The exhaustion following those nine battles, which culminated at Wilton, after which fight peace was made, frustrated, and for a time postponed, that plan. Where the eight unnamed fights of that long campaign were fought is not now known. It is possible that the chain of positions in the north of Wessex which still preserve under one form or other the significant name of "Ethandune" —the "hill of the heathen"—may mark four of those fields. One of these Ethandunes is close to Bath, and has its tradition of an Alfredian victory.

The peace of Wilton lasted for five years. Alfred had won too good a name as a leader, and the Wessex forces were too war-hardened, for the Danes to care to break it until their conquests beyond the Thames were fully complete. In that peaceful interval Alfred had full time to see to the welfare of the Somerset lands which he had inherited, renewing his acquaintance with and receiving the homage of his thanes as king. In that time he certainly made himself well loved as landlord and friend by his tenants in a way which was to stand him in good stead before very long. The Danes had not forgotten the hope of winning the Wessex kingdom.

On Twelfth Night, 876, Alfred was in hiding in Athelney. His herdsmen had found him that refuge, and his own thanes and franklins would not desert him in his utmost danger. In the early part of the previous year there had been a sudden inroad of the Mercian Danes, who had marched across Wessex to Wareham, where they intended to make a junction with a great fleet of newcomers from Denmark, and complete the conquest. Alfred's ships, and a gale, had scattered that fleet, and he himself chased the land forces westward from Wareham to Exeter, where, no doubt, they hoped to find what was left of their sea force. He had forced them to surrender in Exeter,

and they had returned, after the making of a new pact, to Mercia, by way of Gloucester, where they went into winter quarters.

In mid-winter they had suddenly broken their pact, had left their quarters, and were ravaging the west far and wide. Somerton was sacked after Chippenham had first fallen, and so utterly unexpected was this march that there had been no time to call up the levies against it. Possibly Alfred was spending his Yule at his royal house at Chippenham, or at Somerton, when the news came that the Danes were on him. At all events, the pursuit of him must have been so close and personal that for a time the refuge in Athelney was the one resort.

The fen-girt isle, lying almost at the confluence of the Tone and Parrett, was safe enough. It is barely raised from the surrounding level, and is almost yearly an island again in fact as it was in the days of the Athelings. The thickets of willow and alder which screened the herdsman's hut have gone, but still the flood water finds the beds of the ancient meres and fills them, and the water stands in the meadows where once the unchanging swamps of Saxon Somerset were. The nearest high ground is the southern slope of the Quantocks, two miles away; to the south, double that extent of fen and mere lay between it and the Hamdon hills; while the Polden ridge to the east is about the same distance, and equally inaccessible. Only the fenmen, Alfred's own thralls of Newton and Aller, knew the secret of the crossing of those wastes, and they were faithful, even had the foe tracked the hunted king to the fenland border.

While the chase and search lasted, the days in Athelney seem to have been terrible. It was a hard winter, and at times food was scarce, so that the men of the king had to raid the farms of their own folk for provender. The secret of the royal refuge could not be betrayed by peaceful asking for help for him as yet; and

those raids were doubtless thought to be Danish. The white marsh mists are ague-laden, and the herdsman's cottage would have been but of wattle and mud. It is to those first days of close hiding that the old story of the burnt cakes belongs, and there is no reason why it should not be true, whatever question there may be as to the way in which the written record of it has been kept. One would not have it disbelieved in the modern way which is so easy. There is no Somerset man who will doubt it, at all events, and Alfred is Somerset's.

Presently the chase ceased, or, at least, slackened. The queen and the royal children joined Alfred in the island safely, and the thanes began to come and go more freely. Once Alfred rode away to the west, and spoke with the holy Neot, his cousin, in Cornwall. Indeed, unless Alfred had seen that here, in the heart of the country he knew so well, and in the midst of men who were in a very close sense his own, he had found a new vantage ground from whence to renew the struggle for freedom, there was no need for him to have long remained in the fen island.

The Quantock country, which had once been a last stronghold of the British, whose camps still crested the heights, was open to him, while beyond that would be position after position to the north-west, in Exmoor. We have no record that Taunton, Ina's old fortress, had fallen, and tradition says that it was still Alfred's; and again to the westward lay unharried Devon, where there was still a levy under Odda the earl which might, and presently did, give a good account of itself. It is possible that the known existence of that levy held back the Danes from advance westward for a time, for Devon would, even were Alfred lost as he seemed, be ready to hold her own, and nowhere to better advantage than at Taunton.

Perhaps a lesser leader than Alfred might have chosen to begin a campaign from either of those rallying grounds,

and with that force; but the king chose to remain in Athelney. In the weary days and vision-haunted nights of the winter he had planned afresh, and saw his way to what might be a decisive onslaught on the swarming enemy, knowing that nothing short of a crushing blow would be of much avail.

The host from Mercia, lately reinforced from across the sea, and now under Guthrum, Ingvar's successor in East Anglia, lay at Chippenham as its headquarters. Hubba, with a fresh fleet, lay in Milford Haven, where he had wintered in a still known place, waiting only for spring and fair weather in order to join forces for the final reduction of the west in a summer campaign. To fall on Guthrum, therefore, fifty miles away at Chippenham, was to risk the barring of retreat by that landing at any time, and at best would but end in a retreat of the Danes to Mercia and renewal of the long war, as after Wilton or Exeter treaties.

It might be possible to force the Danes to concentrate within his reach, and away from their supports and refuge across the Mercian border. Across the fen eastward was the long ridge of the Poldens, dominating it, but lying like a tongue of land between the impassable Parrett and Brue swamps; to the south lay the equally dominating line of the Hamdon hills, almost as isolated. But Wessex beyond them was wasted and in Danish hands. Guthrum would have no fear of a foe thence, and either of those positions would seem safe to him, and the best if he feared a rising in the fenland. He might be made to fear one, and then Alfred knew that behind him Wessex might rise as one man if he called. Hubba might try to land where he would in that case. Both he and Guthrum, if he succeeded, would have to fight their way back to the Thames, with Odda's Devon levies hanging on their rear.

So soon as the spring came in, therefore, Alfred and his Somerset thanes left their close hiding. In the very

midst of the fen, a short two miles in the Polden direction from Athelney, lies a patch of rising ground at the meeting place of the two rivers, and there, taking what was probably a natural "mump" as a basis, they commenced the building of that triple-entrenched fort which Asser afterwards so much praised. The work is the most striking feature of the great level from every point of the surrounding hills, and rose as a sign to every marauding Dane that the Saxons were drawing again to a head, and that yonder was a stronghold which would tax all their resources to reduce, even could it be reached by them. Nor could it have been long before the whisper went round that Alfred was found again, and that it was to him that Somerset was gathering across the meres.

It is strange how the course of that Somerset campaign has been clouded and rendered unintelligible by one initial mistake. Camden, with little knowledge of the country, conjectured that the Danes remained at Chippenham, near which are two of those "Ethandune" sites, although the chroniclers which he knew plainly stated that Alfred and his men fought "daily battles" with the host, from Athelney. His conjectures have been copied again and again by "library historians," until they have acquired a fictitious weight of authority which rests on no more solid basis than the few lines of the old antiquary, and still renders the following of the definite chronicle accounts hopeless. It was impossible for that fort to grow under the eyes of the great host of Danes without some attempt on their part to crush the gathering which it portended.

And so came about those daily sallies by the men of Somerset from the fen, as the enemy no doubt tried to force the passage across it from the Poldens and Hamdons, until at last Guthrum would end the struggle once for all. Hubba must land on the north, while he moved the whole of his own force down to meet his ally, thus closing Alfred in the fenland he had chosen, and cutting off his supplies.

Hubba crossed with twenty-three ships before Easter, and landed "in Devon in Wessex," at a place only to be identified by the name of the "Castle of Kynwith," which was close at hand. Camden, in trying to trace the course of events, and misled by the confusion by an earlier writer of Apeldore in Kent, where there was a later Danish landing, with Apeldore in Devon, sought for Hubba's landing place at the latter, owning that the required castle was not to be found. There is no hint that Hubba landed at this juncture so hopelessly far west as Apeldore in the chronicles, but Camden's question has been taken as proved, and a site for the fortress found for him which now appears in the ordnance maps. The old haven of Combwich in the Parrett mouth, with its covering fort in what is now known as "Cannington Park," accurately answering to Asser's description, was unknown to Camden and his copyists, who perhaps did not realise that the "Devon in Wessex" of Alfred's time included the land from the Mendips westward won by Ina from Geraint of Dyvnaint, and incorporated into Wessex.

From a strategic point, the landing at Combwich would have been correct. Athelney lies but a few hours' march to the south, and is visible from the fort, while Guthrum's men were on the Poldens, within sight from the river. The tradition of the battle still exists there, beside the name, and the bones of the slain lie under the old stone walls of the hill fort.

Odda and the Devon levies met the ships. The hardly-forgotten "ash faggot" fire of Taunton may recall his march to the river, and the name "Hodderscombe," on the near Quantocks, may come from his camp there while he watched the ships to the landing place. It is said that Alfred himself was with the force. There was something like a disaster on that first day, and Alfred was hurried back to Athelney by his thanes, while the earl and six hundred of his men were shut up in the fort. That was then, as Asser described it, and as it still might

be, impregnable save from the eastward. There is a double line of earthworks still across that one easy slope up to the old stone walls, and Hubba waited to starve the small beaten force into surrender. Possibly he thought that Alfred was there.

Odda and his men waxed desperate, and made a sortie. Hubba fell, and his magic Raven banner was carried to Alfred, while the remainder of his men made their way to Guthrum with the tale of their defeat. Again, if Guthrum had not already moved from Wiltshire, he must have done so now, either to meet the defeated force or to crush that rash and already decimated six hundred. And so he massed at Edington Hill on the Poldens, whence he could watch Odda if he crossed the narrow neck of the fen at the place where Bridgwater now stands, and whence he could see the sparkle of the mail of Alfred's thanes on the fortress across the fen. He had set himself in the king's hands, with but one way back to Mercia open to him—the Roman road along the hills to Street, and so back to Wilts. Yet there was no reason why he should have thought of danger in that direction. He called in his men from the towns, leaving them waste behind them, and planned to force the fens.

Then Wessex rose. Word went that his thanes should meet Alfred on a given day at a given place, and to that place—Ecgbryht's Stone, on the borders of Selwood Forest—he rode seven weeks after Easter. And there met him, "as one risen from the dead," Somerset and Dorset, Wilts. and Hants., and with that force behind him, Alfred swept from Selwood back down the Roman road, and drove the Danes from their position at the greatest Ethandune of all—Edington Hill—penning them in a helpless rout into some unnamed "burh" at the end of the hills. This may have been the old Roman fortress at Bridgwater, which was then a nameless site, or it may have been at the other Roman works which still may be traced at Dunball; or did

Font in Aller Church.

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Alfred drive the Danes into the Parrett fens until they were actually forced into the new "burh" which he had abandoned yesterday? It is possible, for there they would be helpless, and the fortnight's siege which followed could have but one ending. In either place, they were cut off by the fens and Alfred from retreat or reinforcement.

Only an absolutely hopeless position of this kind could have led to the acceptance of the Saxon conditions which were imposed. Alfred was accepted as overlord, and the line of the "Danelagh" definitely fixed as the limit of their possessions. Within those boundaries the Danes were to retire by way of Chippenham, while Guthrum and thirty of his chiefs were to accept Christianity. The oaths on the holy ring of the Asir had not bound them before.

It is chronicled that Guthrum "bore witness that he wished to become a Christian," as if the Danish king himself had already come under the influence of the Faith during his ten years in England. It is quite likely; but it could not be expected that the whole of that wild host of heathen Danes would acquiesce in the abandonment of the Asir by their leaders. There may have been a measure of precaution against a fanatical outbreak in the choice of the church of Aller, across the fen at the westward end of the Hamdon hills, as the place of the baptism, and of Wedmore, equally safe beyond the Brue, as that of the subsequent "chrism loosing" and signature of the final treaty, still known as the "Frith of Wedmore," and for long the document quoted in any question between Dane and Saxon as a final authority. There had been such an outbreak of malcontents which had ended a treaty making at Wareham. It is possible, of course, that this church and house almost alone had been saved from destruction by the same accident of position.

There is a Saxon font at Aller which may be that of Guthrum's christening, and the foundations of the house

of the king at Wedmore are still shewn. The lines of the Danish earthworks facing the fen and Athelney on Edington hill are still to be traced, and two stones marking "Swain's Leap" may commemorate the feat of some Danish Swein on the day of the battle. The bones of Hubba's men still bear the dint of Saxon sword and arrow at the Combwich fort, and the hearth of the fire beacon on the Quantocks which told the Selwood men that all was ready, is still on the height above "Odda's combe"; but of the little monastery which Alfred reared in the island of his refuge as a thank-offering, not one stone is left. There is a solitude which is a monument to another, lesser, king.

We cannot follow Alfred further in the peace which he had won. If we think of him again in Somerset, it is as watching the builders as the work went on at Athelney, or as on his manors, standing as King Sigurd stood when his mighty stepson, Olaf, came home to victory, "with his two men, now amid the acres, and now where the corn was being stacked, clad in a blue kirtle, blue hose, and high shoes laced to the leg, with a grey cape and wide-brimmed grey hat, and his staff, whereon was a silver-gilt knob and silver ring, in his hand." For Alfred was in his home with us, and the cares of state might there pass from him for a while. Nought more kindly might he do at the last than to leave those manors to his eldest son and successor, Edward.[1]

CHAS. W. WHISTLER.

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1 For full details of Alfred's possessions in Somerset may be consulted *The Land of Quantock* and *The Forests of Somerset*, by the Rev. W. Gresswell. The full texts of the chroniclers with regard to the Somerset campaign of 878 may be found in the present writer's articles in *The Antiquary*, Nos. 138 and 139, June and July, 1901.

TAUNTON AND ITS CASTLE[1]

By the Rev. D. P. Alford, M.A.

PLEASANTLY associated with the general history of the country, most of our towns owe their origin either to the building of a fortress against public enemies or to the founding of a monastery for religious uses. Like Launceston in Cornwall, Taunton had a castle for its first source and centre; but during the middle ages its chief interests, like those of Tavistock in Devon, are connected with its monastery.

Taunton Castle is the earliest English fortress, by some two hundred years, of which we have any written historical record. There may, indeed, have been British forts in the neighbourhood much earlier, at Norton and at Castle Neroche, which were probably modified for their own use by the Roman conquerors; and, at all events, the remnants of ancient sunken roads towards Bathpool, by Galmington, and on Cotlake Hill, suggest a considerable settlement here in Celtic times; whilst large discoveries of pottery at Norton and of coins at Holway seem to show that the clear-sighted Romans fully appreciated the value of our situation in the midst of one of the most fertile valleys in the country. But this does not interfere with the truth of my statement, for there is no written record of the origin of any English fortress

1 The chief authorities for this paper are—*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle;* Dugdale's *Monasticon;* Savage's *History of Taunton;* and various articles in the *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society.*

nearly so early as ours here in Taunton, where the earthwork is a remnant of the first foundation, laid all but twelve hundred years ago by that great conqueror, law-giver, and Church reformer, Ina, King of Wessex from A.D. 688 to 726. The record is found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the earliest history in any modern language.

Under the date A.D. 722 we read: "This year Queen Ethelburga overthrew Taunton, which Ina had before built. And Eadbert the exile went away into Surrey and Sussex, and Ina fought against the South Saxons."

Of the year 710 we read: "Ina and Nunna his kinsman fought against Geraint the king of the Welsh." This Geraint was addressed by his contemporary, St. Aldhelm, the first Bishop of Sherborne, as "the most glorious lord of the western realm"; and inasmuch as his sway had extended from the Land's End to the Parret, he fairly deserved the title. Freeman and other good authorities consider that this short statement of the *Chronicle* means that in 710 Ina defeated Geraint, driving him back beyond the Quantock and the Brendon hills; and they reasonably conclude that it was on the occasion of this victory that Ina set up his fortress on the banks of the Tone as an outpost to protect his newly-acquired lands in our rich valley of Taunton Deane.

We may notice, in passing, that this name itself tells us of the successive occupations of the district by the British and the English. For *Deane* is a British word, adopted by the English, signifying a deeply-wooded valley, and especially applied to the swine pastures in a forest; *Taun*, which stands for the river Tone, is a variant of the Celtic Tan or Don, meaning water; and *ton*, which stands for town, is the favourite English word for a protected enclosure. The district, therefore, was known to King Geraint and his Welsh people as the Deane, that is, the wooded valley, of the Tone, before they were driven from this pleasant land in 710. But it

was the Anglo-Saxon King, Ina, who, having built the fortress here, that is, having thrown up a mound of earth, surrounded it with palisades and probably diverted the river and one of its affluent streams to protect it, called it *Taunton*, the town or fortified enclosure on the Tone.

Whilst the town has steadily grown until the small enclosure around Ina's fort has become an important borough covering many acres, and occupied by some twenty thousand people, the Deane, or forest, has steadily diminished, until it is only represented by the gnarled oaks and the majestic elms that still adorn our parklands, and are vanishing, all too quickly, from our wayside hedges.

But why did Queen Ethelburga destroy the fort which her husband, King Ina, had built? From what follows in the *Chronicle*, it is reasonable to suppose that this outpost had been seized by Ealdbert, one of the cousinly Pretenders who disturbed the reign of King Ina, and that, in alliance with the defeated Welsh, only too glad thus to recover their lost ground, he was using Taunton as a stronghold for further assault on his royal kinsman. The young princeling seems to have availed himself of the King's absence to make his attack. But the brave Queen rose to the emergency: she drove the Pretender out of Wessex into Sussex, there to be followed and overthrown by King Ina; and having taken Taunton, she destroyed it, lest it should be used again as a refuge for the King's enemies. For the fact of a Pretender finding temporary refuge in Taunton, we have interesting historical parallels in Perkin Warbeck's sojourn amongst us in 1497 and "King" Monmouth's in 1685.

It is not at all likely that Taunton was allowed long to lie waste. Its site was too important to be neglected. We may be sure that when the immediate danger was past it was again occupied, and, as those unsettled times required, again fortified against assault. A tradition in Leland's collection, repeated in the *Annals of the Church*

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of Winchester, if we could trust it, would lead us to conclude that Ethelburga's spirited action was pleasantly and properly recognised by the town and its surrounding lands being made over to her and her successors as a sort of queenly dower. In Leland we are told that Ethelburga's immediate successor, "Queen Fritheswitha, the mother of St. Frithelwithe the Virgin, gave to the church of Winchester the manor of Taunton, in which she lies buried." The *Annals* say that "Ethelard being King of Wessex, his wife Frithewitha, the Queen, gave to Winchester church Taunton from her own patrimony; and that Ethelard, on his part, added to the aforesaid manor, for the benefit of the same church, seven farms (mansas)." Ethelwulf, also, the same authority tells us, on his return from Rome in 876, "gave to the church of Winchester, for the increase of Taunton, one hundred and forty-three hides of land and two manors (maneria)."

At all events, we may well believe that in the time of Ethelwulf's son, our great and good King Alfred, Taunton was still a stronghold of value, not then against the neighbouring West Welsh, but for protection against marauding bands of the terrible Danes. It is, in fact, quite possible that it was reliance upon the loyalty and devotion of this former royal domain, as well as the nearness of his own estates with their faithful ceorls in Quantockland, that induced Alfred, at the crisis of his fortune, at Easter, 878, to set up his camp of refuge only seven miles off at Athelney.

For the further history of the castle, the buildings themselves are our best guide. They tell us of a solid Norman keep built to the westward of Ina's earthwork, probably by Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester, and the warlike brother of King Stephen. The gatehouse, with the curtain ending in drum towers, of which one only remains, was first erected at the close of the thirteenth century, under Edward I.; but it was restored with Perpendicular additions by Bishop Thomas Langton,

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whose arms, with the date 1495, may be seen on the escutcheon just above the arch. Probably Bishop Langton also rebuilt the great hall; whilst Bishop Horne, who is sometimes credited with this work, most likely only repaired the hall, but tacked on to it the southward structure on pilasters, which used to be the grand jury room, and shows his arms with the date 1577 on its front wall.[1]

In the great hall were held from "time immemorial" the Lent Assizes, the Quarter Sessions, and the Bishop of Winchester's Manorial Courts. In 1785, the hall was in such a ruinous state that something had to be done to keep the Assizes in Taunton. Sir Benjamin Hammet, being Member of Parliament for the borough, showed much spirit in meeting the difficulty. Having obtained for himself the offices of Keeper of the Castle and Bailiff, with aid from Mr. Alexander Popham, his fellow Member of Parliament, and some private subscriptions, he set about restoring the castle and the hall. The hall he divided into two courts for criminal and *nisi-prius* cases; and in the castle he fitted up a decent suite of rooms for the Judge's lodgings. The inner moat in the castle garden was filled in at the same time. Further alterations were made in 1816, especially the rebuilding of rooms over the arches, which were then all that remained of the east gate. About that time there was another ruined gateway beyond the Winchester Arms, where the Potwater stream from Pitminster enclosed the larger castle area on the west. This larger area, extending southward to the further side of Corporation Street, was surrounded by a moat that drew its waters from the Potwater, to empty them into the mill stream—the northern boundary—a little above the town mills, after sending forth a smaller arm to embrace the inner ward or castle proper.

The castle ceased to be used for the Assizes on the

1 Presentment to jury for sale of the Manor in 1647, which also reports that two rooms in the Castle belong to the *tenants*, for keeping the records of the Manor.

completion of the new Shire Hall in 1858. It was used as a private residence until 1874, when it was purchased by the Taunton and Somerset Archæological Society for £2,850. The full benefit of the purchase, however, was scarcely realised until the hall was publicly opened as a museum by Lord Cork on May 21st, 1902.

Whether Queen Fritheswitha gave Taunton to Winchester or not, certainly by the year 904 it did belong to the church of that city; for in 904 we find Bishop Denewulf[1] and his church giving lands to Edward the Elder for the perpetual freedom from royal tribute of the monastery of Taunton, which words seem to show clearly that the manor of Taunton Deane was then the property of the Bishop of Winchester, and that he had a monastery here under his protection.

As to the work of the manor and its importance, the Domesday Survey informs us that there were sixty-four burgesses in Taunton, paying each sixpence a year to the Bishop of Winchester for his protection. There was a mint yielding to the Bishop fifty shillings a year; and we have in our museum two silver pennies of Edward the Confessor, one of Harold, and two of William the Conqueror, that were struck in the Taunton mint. There was a market here yielding also fifty shillings a year; and there were three mills yielding ninety-five shillings. The mills were of great and enduring value. In the Pipe Roll accounts for 1208-9 we have returns from the mills below the castle, and at Langford, from the mill at Tabridge[2] and the fish-pond, and from the mill at Hulle. When the Bishop of Winchester finally parted with the manor in the last century, he retained his right over minerals and the river; so that to the present day the owner of the town mills has to pay £50 a year to the

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[1] The reputed herdsman of Alfred and his protector during his wanderings in Selwood in the disastrous early days of 878, before he set up his camp at Athelney.

[2] *i.e.*, Twobridges, now Obridge.

Bishop of Winchester for the use of the stream drawn from the Tone at French Weir.

The Constable of the Castle lived there with his family. He had to entertain the Bishop of Winchester, or the King himself, on their visits to Taunton; but the cost of living, whether ordinary or extraordinary, was charged to the Bishop's account. Thus in the year 1209 (10 John), already referred to, thirteen sticks of eels (and each stick had twenty-five fish on it) are said to have been consumed by the Constable and his family at their table. In the same account,[1] heavy extra charges are made for consumption of food in the Castle in expectation of a visit from the Bishop and our Lord the King. Money is also spent in salting and drying the venison of our Lord the King which had been sent to Taunton from Bruges, *i.e.*, Bridgwater, and £4 4*s.* are expended on four tuns of wine at Exeter, and on binding them and carrying them to Taunton.

In 1294, Nicholas de Bonville was Constable of the Castle. In 1417 (6 Henry V.), the office was held by Thomas Chaucer. He was the son of our first great English poet, and was a man of mark, for he was frequently chosen Speaker of the Commons and was Ambassador to France under both Henry IV. and Henry V. In 1434, Sir John Daubeney was Constable; Sir John Stradding in 1438; and Lord Daubeney, the Lord Chamberlain, in 1497, the memorable year of the Cornish rising. The office was held in 1612 by Sir Francis Popham, and the last Constable was Francis Keene, of Wells, who was appointed March 10th, 1644, some three years before the manor was sold by ordinance of Parliament with the Castle and all the appurtenances thereof. The manor was recovered for the Bishop of Winchester in 1660, and remained in his possession till some way on in the nineteenth century. Then it passed again into

[1] The same record tells us of colts being devoured by *wolves* in Hants.

lay hands; and in 1866 it was bought by that able and spirited Tauntonian, Serjeant Cox, to whose family it still belongs.

The representative of the Bishop was his Steward or Bailiff, who presided over the weekly meetings of Court-Leet, and imposed petty fines for small offences. Other officers were the Gatekeeper of the Castle and the Clerk of the Castle, Town, and Lordship of Taunton; and in 1628 both offices were granted to George Browne and Robert Browne and the survivor of them. Besides these there was the Portreeve, whose duty it was to collect the rents for the Lord of the Manor. In more recent time, two Bailiffs and two Portreeves were chosen annually in the Court-Leet, besides two Constables and six tything men or petty Constables. For long intervals, when the town had no corporation,[1] the Bailiffs were the returning officers, and usually summoned and presided over public meetings.

Before the Reform Bill, the parliamentary franchise was limited to a part of St. Mary's parish, and the crowding of the centre of the town with courts—or *colleges*, as they used to be called—is said to be due to the monetary value of the franchise, when every man who cooked his own victuals, and was therefore called a pot-waller, *i.e.*, pot-boiler, had a vote. Amongst the Members of Parliament of the borough should be mentioned Francis Bacon, in 1586; Sir Hugh Portman, 1625; Robert Blake, 1656; John Speke, 1690; Sir Francis Warre, the friend of the Flag Maidens, 1701; Sir William Pynsent, 1714; John Trenchard, 1722; Abraham Elton, 1725; Alexander Popham, 1768; Benjamin Hammett, from 1782 to 1800;

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1 Our first charter, 1627, was forfeited in 1660. Our second charter was secured for us in 1677 by the intervention of Peter Mews, then Bishop of Bath and Wells. In 1685, when he was Bishop of Winchester, he distinguished himself by directing Feversham's artillery upon our unfortunate peasantry at Sedgemoor. This charter was allowed to lapse in 1792. Our present energetic Corporation was secured, after a hard fight, in 1877.

Henry Powell Collins, 1811; and Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, from 1830 to 1859.

The customs of the manor are supposed to have been formally established by Walkelin, the first Norman Bishop of Winchester and the Conqueror's cousin. But some of them are peculiar, and are probably of much earlier date. For instance, the rule of inheritance was that, on a man's death, his holding went to his wife; but if he had no wife living, then to his youngest son or daughter, or his youngest brother or sister, or his youngest next-of-kin "of the worthiest blood," as the case might be. This favouring of the youngest presumes that the elder children have been already provided for. Such a custom has often prevailed amongst a pastoral people like the Tartars, and was not unknown among early settlers in America.

Besides paying their rent, the customary tenants had to give so much labour to the lord's land, and to carry his corn to Langport, Ilchester, or even to Topsham, whence, if required, they were to bring back wine for his lordship at two shillings a cask. Moreover, the tenant could not sell a horse or give his daughter in marriage without the consent of my Lord Bishop. As the bishops and religious houses were usually the best landlords, we may hope that, in spite of some constraint and compulsory service, both tenants and labourers had a fairly good time under the rule of the Church of Winchester.

But, in fact, the Bishops had from early times transferred to others a large portion of their privileges, with the accompanying duties, the burden falling, as was then the habit, upon some local religious establishment. Of the monastery mentioned by Denewulf we hear nothing more, though a strange mistake[1] in a charter of 10 Edward II. seems to show that some tradition of it still lingered in the neighbourhood. Nor of the house of the Carmelites or White Friars do we know anything,

[1] It says that Giffard founded the Priory "before the time of King Edmund Ironside."

but that it was founded here in 1342 (15 Edward III.) by Walter de Meryet. But about the year 1129 (20 Henry I.), that devout, large-hearted man, William Giffard, Chancellor of England, as well as Bishop of Winchester, gave "all his land towards the north, beyond the east gate of his town of Taunton," to a Prior and Canons of the Augustinian Order, which had first come into England about twelve years before. This Priory lasted on to the dissolution of the monasteries, and in peaceful times the interest of the town centred round it, rather than round the castle. These Canons wore their beards; their dress was a black cassock, with a white rochet, a black cloak and hood, and a cap. Thus habited, we may picture them frequenting the regular services in their conventual church, teaching the children and visiting the sick, pleasantly engaged in their gardens and orchards, or lookng after the mills at Obridge and Firepool, and the *vivaria* or fishponds laid out in various directions[1] for the large demands of Lent and fish-days. Some, perhaps, would be copying in the Scriptorium, for these Augustinian Canons were supposed to be like the great Augustine of Hippo, whose name they bore, at once studious and devout. It does not, indeed, say much for the studious ways of our Canons that when Leland visited the priory in 1536 he only found three books in the library worth mentioning—a mediæval chronicle and two late Greek medical treatises; but, then, Leland may not have thought it worth while to mention such familiar books as copies of the Fathers and of the Greek and Latin classics. And whatever its scholarship may have been, the priory certainly trained its Canons to be good managers and men of business; for from 1249 more than a dozen Tauntonians, having been Canons here, were preferred to offices of dignity and trust in other places. Amongst these, one "John de Tanton" was Vicar of North Curry in 1328;

1 There was one in Vivary Park, and probably another at Pool Farm near Pisces Bridge.

and a "Walter de Tanton," another "John de Tanton," were respectively Abbots of Glastonbury in 1274 and 1322.

Besides land for house and garden, orchard and farm and fish-ponds, Bishop Giffard also granted to his Priory all the churches of Taunton, with all their chapels and their belongings, the land of Blagdon, the church of Kingston with its chapels and belongings, and the churches of Leigh and Hill (Angersleigh and Bishop's-Hull), with their belongings. The church of Pitminster was given soon afterwards by Bishop Henry de Blois; and amongst other donations are recorded the land of Lydiard by William de Mohun, the land of Upcot by Roger Briton, and twenty acres of land in Hestercombe by Hugo de Flory. The charter of Henry II. giving these details was witnessed by Thomas à Becket, who was then Chancellor.

Having absorbed the church property of Taunton, the priory was bound to perform the church duties, and it would seem that about the end of the thirteenth century these duties had been somewhat neglected. An ordinance of 1308 (2 Edward II.) obliges the Prior, as Rector and Patron, to appoint in aid of the Vicar of the parish church of St. Mary Magdalene one secular priest for Stoke St. Mary and Ruishton, one for Hill Bishop, and a third for Staplegrove and St. James'; but on Sundays and solemn festivals the Prior might send one of his Canons "of good repute" to help in the celebration of the mass at St. James' and Ruishton. The same ordinance, whilst providing the Vicar of Taunton with a manse and £6 a year, a good supply of oats and hay for his horse and of bread and ale for himself, leaves him in charge, not only of St. Mary's and of the chapel of St. Peter in the castle, but also of Wilton and Trull. So that the Vicar of St. Mary's, under Edward II., was almost as great a pluralist in clerical labours as was my venerable ancestor, James Hurly, under George II., who, as his tombstone[1]

1 In Wilton Churchyard.

testifies, was Incumbent Curate of St. James', Trull and Wilton, Master of the College School, and Chaplain of the Gaol. In fact, judging from Taunton Deane, we should conclude that it was left to the nineteenth century to establish a resident incumbent in every parish. Assuredly, with all their chapels and chantries, our mediæval forefathers did not secure this any more than those of the eighteenth century.

Our remaining space will be best occupied in taking a rapid survey of the chief events, ecclesiastical and civil, which have happened beneath the walls of Taunton Castle since the priory was founded.

In 1277 the Canons were rebuilding their conventual church, and good Bishop Bronescombe, of Exeter, was urging all the faithful in his diocese to help in the work. The church was still a-building in 1337, sixty years later, and an indulgence of fifteen days was promised to any "truly penitent and confessed persons" who would help to complete it. In 1315 an unhappy persecuted Knight Templar was doing penance in our priory, whilst another was doing the same in the priory at Montacute, and two more in the abbeys of Muchelney and of Glastonbury.

From 1382 to 1384 a law-suit was pending between our Prior and the Abbot of Glastonbury, because the latter, who owned Bathpool, had allowed his corn mill and his fulling mill there to project so far into the river Tone as to trouble the fish, flood the meadows, and, worst of all, to obstruct the waterway by which such useful merchandise as charcoal, salt, iron, lime, as well as grain and ale and wine, were brought to the priory.

In April, 1438, our Prior, Thomas Benet, was summoned to the Council of Ferrara, which was attempting to check the advance of the Turks by a reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches. Alas! it was too late; and within sixteen years the Turks had secured a firm footing in Europe by the capture of Constantinople. But good came out of evil, for the flying Greeks carried with

them the torch of learning which was to kindle the flame of the Renaissance, and to bring a mental and moral awakening to the western world.

In 1451, just on the eve of that disastrous and yet fruitful dynastic struggle, the War of the Roses, Lord Bonville was besieged in our castle by that violent Yorkist partisan, the Earl of Devon. The Earl being presently supported by William Herbert, Lord de Molines, and Richard Duke of York himself, Bonville surrendered; and henceforth espousing the cause of the White Rose, he was taken and beheaded at the second battle of St. Albans in 1491.

The manor and town of Taunton, however, seem to have remained true to the Lancastrian party. On March 16th, 1467 (6 Edward IV.), William Waynfleet, Bishop of Winchester and Lord of the Manor, granted to Nicholas Dixon, Vicar of St. Mary's, a parcel of ground in the midst of the market-place for the "new building" of a Guildhall, in remembrance of the Bishop, and for the use and profit of the townspeople; and in acknowledgment of this grant, the Vicar and his heirs were to present yearly to the Bishop and his successors at the exchequer in Taunton, on the Nativity of John the Baptist, "one red rose for all services and demands." The Guildhall then erected probably answered its purpose until a new one was provided, when the present market-house with its arcades was built in 1773. The acceptance of a red rose in lieu of services seems to show that Taunton's leading men did not despair of the Lancastrian cause, even in the sixth year of Edward IV.

In June, 1497, when Lord Daubeney of Barrington Court was Constable of the Castle, Taunton was crowded with many thousand Cornishmen, who were marching peacefully to London to protest against the heavy subsidy for the Scotch war. They attributed this burden, not to the King, Henry VII., but to his chief counsellors, Cardinal Morton, Richard Fox, then Bishop of Durham, Oliver

King, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Sir Thomas Lovel, and Sir Reginald Bray. The fines imposed for "aiding and comforting" the Cornishmen on their march prove that not only many of the country clergy, with the monasteries of Cleeve and Ford, of Athelney and Muchelney, but also such men of proved loyalty as Sir Hugh Luttrell of Dunster, Sir John Speke of Whitelackington, and John Sydenham of Brympton, sympathised with this objection to the King's new advisers; and there is good reason for believing that Daubeney was very much at one with his neighbours in this feeling. He did, indeed, overthrow the Cornishmen when at last, under the King's order, he met them on Blackheath; but Lord Audley, who was then building his mansion at Nether Stowey and had joined the Remonstrants at Wells, was allowed to lead them all through the south of England unmolested. Perhaps it was due to Daubeney's sympathy with their cause, as well as to the King's natural leniency, that the Cornishmen were so readily pardoned, only Lord Audley and their leaders, Flamank the lawyer and Michael Joseph the smith, being executed.

Unhappily, this kindliness was taken for weakness, and in September the Cornishmen were again in Taunton, no longer as peaceful remonstrants, but as open rebels following the standard of Perkin Warbeck. Historians have never quite made up their minds whether Warbeck was an impostor or a true prince. Ford, in his fine play, gives him the bearing and the speech of a Prince; but here in Taunton his conduct was anything but princelike, for as the King's forces began to enclose him, without striking a blow he fled away secretly to the New Forest, and left his followers without a leader.

All through this affair, Henry's foresight and his wise clemency stand out in striking contrast with the conduct of James II. in the Monmouth rebellion. He showed his astuteness in sending agents into the West with handsome presents of money to secure the allegiance of Exeter and

other wavering places and people. He boldly came to Taunton on October 4th, there received Warbeck from Beaulieu, where he had taken sanctuary, heard his confession, spared his life, and attached him to his train. Then, passing on to Exeter, he pardoned the rebels, who appeared before him with halters round their necks, and only imposed fines on those who were fairly well off.

It was probably during this stay at Taunton that Henry VII. contributed to the rebuilding of the churches and towers in and about Taunton, wishing thereby to recognise the attachment of Somerset to the Red Rose in time past, and also to strengthen that attachment against future discontent. Very likely it was to commemorate this visit that Bishop Langton set up an escutcheon with the royal arms above his own on the gateway of the castle, which he was then restoring.

It was quite in keeping with this conciliatory conduct of their royal master that Fox, when Bishop of Winchester, built the college school here in 1522, and that Sir Reginald Bray, the famous architect of St. Mary's at Oxford and of the royal chapels at Windsor and Westminster, volunteered to supply Taunton with the plan of a tower that for height and for elaborate ornament should excel all the beautiful church towers of Somerset. The tower and the new portions of the church of St. Mary were finished in 1508, and Sir Reginald Bray's direction of the work may be commemorated in the initials "R. B." which were carved amid angels in the transom of the west window of the belfry. Moreover, the letters "R. B.," with his coat-of-arms, are still to be seen in the middle of the west window of the north aisle, and in the year 1905 his figure in steel armour and carrying a model of St. Mary's tower found a place amongst other Taunton worthies in the military window at the east end of the further south aisle.

Our priory attained its highest honours in 1499, when Pope Alexander VI. conferred upon the Prior, John

Prowse, and his successors, the privileges of using the ring, the pastoral staff, and other pontifical ornaments, except the mitre, of admitting to minor orders the canons and choristers of his monastery, and of giving episcopal benediction, as he is perhaps represented on the quoin-stone of his chapel at Ruishton.

In 1512, Richard Beere, the friend of Erasmus and the King's Ambassador to Rome, as well as the munificent restorer of his own abbey of Glastonbury, was rebuilding our "Spital." This was originally founded as a leper-house about 1150, with its chapel of St. Margaret and its Master and Brethren. In 1280 the advowson of the Spital was given by Thomas Lawbright of West Monkton to the Abbot and Convent of Glastonbury. As it was rebuilt by Richard Beere three hundred years ago, so it stands now,[1] and a stone panel embossed with his mitre and the initials "R. B." still testifies to his good work. About the same time, or rather earlier, was built the quaint old almshouse that stood till lately at the south-east corner of St. James' street, and was replaced some few years ago by the pretty cottages at the east of the churchyard.

As in 1522 Taunton received the gift of its handsome schoolhouse from the favourite adviser of Henry VII.—Richard Fox—at one time Bishop of Bath and Wells, but then old and blind, though still active in good works, in his see of Winchester; so in 1523 our Canons, having lost their Prior, Nicholas Peper, turned to the brilliant rising favourite of Henry VIII., and invited Cardinal Wolsey, who had been Bishop of Bath and Wells since 1518, and was hoping to fill Pope Adrian's place at the Vatican, to choose a new Prior for them. He chose William Yorke, a Canon of Bruton, and probably it was due to this

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1 It stands at the bottom of East Reach, and provides lodging for half a dozen old women. Though close to Taunton, it is in the parish of West Monkton; and in January, 1352-3, the Vicar of St. Mary's was ordered by the Bishop to forbid parishioners of West Monkton to attend Mass at St. Mary's under penalty of ecclesiastical censure. What would clergy and laity think of such an order in these disorderly days?

connection that, in the following year, 1524, William Grendon, one of our Canons, being elected Prior of Stavordale, near Bruton, took measures to unite his new with his old Priory; and in 1533 the Priory of Taunton came into possession of all the property and all the privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Priory of Stavordale.

We read of an Archdeacon of Taunton holding his court in St. Mary's as early as 1244. Many men of note have filled the office of Archdeacon, especially in recent years that redoubtable champion, Anthony Denison; and Dr. Ainslie, learned in Church law; but now, for the first time, Vicar and Archdeacon are combined in one person —the Rev. W. H. Askwith. In 1535, when Polydore Virgil was Archdeacon, an Act of Parliament made Taunton the see of a Suffragan Bishop, and in 1538 William Finche, Prior of Bremar, was consecrated Bishop of Taunton.

As with Tavistock Abbey and other religious houses, the late-coming honours were not long enjoyed by the Taunton Priory. On February 12th, 1539, William Williams, the Prior, and his eleven Canons (in 1339 they were twenty-five) were signing the deed by which they transferred to their most illustrious Prince and Lord, Henry VIII., the whole of their monastery or priory, with all its lands, churches, and charters. Then, in 1544, King Henry granted to William Chaplyn and John Selwood the houses and gardens in Taunton outside the gate, once belonging to the Priory, viz., those in Canon Street, Middle Street, and St. James' Street, and also four chapels with their land, viz., St. Mary Magdalene, with its cemetery hard by St. Mary's Church, St. Paul's to the westward in the parish of Hill Bishop, St. Leonard's in North Street, and St. Margaret's[1] by the Spital, both in the parish of St. James by Taunton. Four years later, in 1548 (2 Edward VI.), this work of spoliation was carried

1 St. Margaret's, with its bell, was sold for £2 13s. 4d. The chapel was in St. James's, though the Spital was in West Monkton.

still further. Seven chantries, among them Holy Trinity and St. Andrew's, were confiscated, and also the two fraternities of St. Sepulchre and Holy Cross. The old régime may have encouraged idleness, but this wholesale destruction left the poor without maintenance, until the law stepped in with its hard and meagre provisions; and it so stinted the means of grace amongst us that it was three hundred years before the growing want was at all efficiently met by the increase of Nonconformist chapels and the building of our three new churches.[1] It is pleasant to remember that some provision was made for the life interest of our Prior and his Canons. The Prior received a pension of £60 a year; and probably, like his brother, the Abbot of the wealthier monastery of Tavistock, he increased his income and pleasantly occupied his time by undertaking some clerical duty. One of his Canons, at all events, Thomas Dale, added £2 13*s.* 4*d.* to his pension of £5 6*s.* 8*d.*, making the total £8 a year, by serving the cure of St. James'.

Still, the suppression of the monasteries, chapels, and chantries must have thrown upon the public many new expenses, and we cannot be surprised that the good people of Taunton soon began to complain of these fresh burdens. In 1548 they complained—and owing to various unhappy circumstances Tauntonians of the present day might join in their complaint—that the "fair and goodly schoolhouse" built by Bishop Fox, in which some one hundred and twenty boys were wont to be taught, "now standeth void without either master, usher, or scholars." A few years later, under Elizabeth, they complained once more of the cost of the school, though by that time it was flourishing under Mr. John Bond, who had two hundred pupils, and amongst them Gilbert Sheldon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. And now they also

[1] For the building and endowing of these new churches the town was chiefly indebted to that "good man of Taunton," Rev. Frederick Jeremiah Smith, the first Vicar of St. John's.

complained that there was but £18 a year for the spiritual cure of the whole town, so that the rest of the charge which used to be met by the priory all fell on the people. Their third item of complaint was that the cost of forty-four almshouses full of poor people, formerly defrayed by lands belonging to the suppressed chantries, had now to be borne, "the whole burden" of it, by the inhabitants.

Such complaints were very natural; but it is good to remember that they were met, and more or less satisfied, by the gifts of generous benefactors. Thus, the founder of the free Grammar School, having made no provision for its staff—probably relying upon the Priory to supply its needs in this respect—in 1554, William Walbee, of Oxford, left twenty marks in land to establish a stipend for the schoolmaster. Nor did the claims of the poor appeal in vain to the Christian feeling of the laity; and during the seventeenth century especially many gifts were made on their behalf, sometimes in almshouses, sometimes in money. In 1591, Simon Saunders gave £22 a year "towards clothing the industrious poor for ever." In 1613, the town lands were secured to Feoffees for "relieving decayed house-keepers and marrying poor maidens." In 1614, Thomas Trowbridge, merchant-tailor; in 1621, Sir George Farwell; and in 1645, Robert Moggridge, clothier, gave land or money "to the poor for ever"; and about the middle of the seventeenth century similar bequests were made by Mr. Clark, Mr. Grabham, and Mr. Warman, and also by Mrs. Jane King and Mrs. Florence Stone; all which grants would seem to have been kindly efforts to meet the wants of the poor without the coercive measures of legislative relief. As to almshouses: In 1615, Richard Huish founded and endowed the almshouse in Old Magdalene Lane, which was taken down some thirty years ago, and is now represented by comfortable new buildings in Magdalene Street, where a portrait of the founder may be seen in the chapel. In

1635, Robert Gray built and endowed the venerable almshouse in East Street; his statue, life-size, with a quaint inscription, adorns the north wall of St. Mary's Church. In 1648, Lady Grace Portman's almshouse at East Gate, which had been much injured during the siege, was rebuilt by Mr. Pope. The "seventeen houses in Little Magdalen Lane," spoken of in a vestry book of 1671, were rebuilt in 1845; and the two houses in St. Paul's Street mentioned in the same entry were sold a few years ago, and the proceeds given towards erecting two more cottages in St. James' Street.

The two great events of the seventeenth century in which Taunton took a really prominent part were the Civil War and the Monmouth rebellion. But our share in those events was too important to be properly treated in a general paper on the history of the town; we must, therefore, be content with an extremely short survey.

It was the turning point of the Civil War, when Robert Blake, the cheerfully brave and calmly heroic, threw himself into Taunton in July, 1644, with his hardy militiamen fresh from the wonderful defence of Lyme, to hold it against the King's forces under their best generals[1] until July, 1645. Essex, more amiable than wise, had been decoyed into Cornwall, where he abandoned his army; and until the "new model" could be brought into operation, the whole country, and especially the West of England, seemed to be almost at the King's feet. Then Blake with his few veterans occupied the town and castle of Taunton, and being well supported by the inhabitants within and without, held it with such courage and tenacity against all comers that, like a rock in the midst of a full stream, this small town hindered and divided the royal forces just long enough for the Parliament so to re-arrange its plans as presently to secure a final victory. It is no

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1 Grenville, Digby, Berkeley, Hopton, Wyndham, and Goring, all failed before Taunton.

Old Taunton.

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wonder that in the anxious months of 1644 and 1645 the thoughts of patriots in London often turned to Taunton and its noble defender; that our fair town seemed to them a modern Saguntum sacrificing itself in the cause of liberty, and that the raising of the siege[1] at last was celebrated with public thanksgivings.

The brave townsmen of Taunton may well have thought that their fight for religious liberty had failed when in 1662 they saw the Rev. George Newton[2] ejected from St. Mary's and the Rev. John Glanville from St. James', and a few years later Newton's devoted assistant, Joseph Alleine,[2] sacrificing his health and life for their spiritual welfare. But the fight was not fought in vain; it swept away for ever the irresponsible Courts of the Star Chamber and Ecclesiastical Commission, it gave an unforgettable warning to crowned heads that England would not submit to an autocrat, and after twenty-eight years of reaction and the one abortive effort in 1685, constitutional government, with civil and religious liberty, was finally established in 1688.

This abortive effort, with its last serious battle on English soil and its abominably cruel retribution, was chiefly enacted in Somerset, with Taunton as its centre. Monmouth was indeed a poor creature; and the cause of liberty found far better champions, three years later, in William and Mary. But, like his prototype Absolom, he "stole the hearts" of the people with his handsome person and genial manners, and these, associated with his unhappy fate and with the courage and patient endurance of his followers, have secured such a lasting interest in him and his enterprise that recent romance has

1 Hepworth Dixon gives a detailed account of the siege of Taunton in his *Life of Robert Blake*, chapter iii. But he is too confident that the town was unwalled; for what was the use of gates without walls of some sort? A popular local tale, *The Fair Maid of Taunton*, written by my late sister, Miss E. M. Alford, is founded on Dixon's narrative.

2 It says much for the tolerance of Vicars, Emmanuel Sharpe and William Cross, that both Newton and Alleine were buried in St. Mary's Church—Alleine in 1668, Newton in 1681.

made them the favourite object of its imaginative treatment.[1]

Seldom has any town dropped so suddenly from the height of joy and hope to the lowest depths of despondency and gloom as did Taunton in the summer of 1685. On Thursday, June 18th, Monmouth, riding hither from Chard, was welcomed with applauding crowds, whilst every house was decorated with green boughs and his way was strewed with flowers. On the 19th Miss Blake delivered to the "Protestant Hero" a naked sword and "a small curious Bible," and twenty-six young girls, her pupils, presented him with the colours wrought by their hands under her direction. With becoming words the Duke accepted Miss Blake's gifts, and rewarded the maidens with a courtly kiss. On the 20th he took his irrevocable step, and was proclaimed King on the Taunton Cornhill; but as he also was called James, to avoid confusion he was spoken of as "King Monmouth."

What a change in twenty days! On July 9th, following hard on the heels of fugitives from Sedgemoor, Colonel Kirke, an officer whose lust and cruelty had shocked even the Moors of Tangier, dragging into the town some two hundred prisoners, had twenty of them hung and quartered the same evening, making a joke of their dying struggles, so tradition says, as he drank his wine at the White Hart. Then, after a few weeks of dreadful suffering and suspense, on September 11th, Kirke was succeeded by the merciless Jeffreys, "that bloody Nero,"[2] as he seemed to the sufferers, who was sweeping through the western shires "with the besom of his cruelties," hanging "young and old in clusters," as if his purpose were "to raise the price of halters." To cool-headed bystanders this atrocious bully seemed to be "perpetually

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1 See Conan Doyle's *Micah Clarke*, Besant's *For Faith and Freedom*, and, more lately, Mr. Valling's pleasant story of adventure, *By Dulvercombe Water*, and Joseph Hocking's *The Chariots of the Lord*.

2 Coad's *Memorandum*, p. 14.

drunk or in a rage, more like a fury than a judge,"[1] and yet it was such a wretch as this that King James II., who sympathised with his cruelty and amply rewarded him for it, sent to devastate the homes of Monmouth's poor benighted followers, whilst, for a bribe, he let their leaders go free. Then followed wholesale executions for treason. A few of the bodies, on heavy payments, were laid in hallowed ground, and their burials are recorded in our church registers; others were hung in chains at cross roads, and more had their heads and quarters nailed over church doorways or on other public buildings, until, as the gentle mediator, Bishop Ken, declared, the whole countryside seemed reeking with blood.

But those executed were not the greatest sufferers: women and boys were sentenced to cruel public floggings; and hundreds were condemned to slavery in the West Indies, to endure, if they survived the awful voyage in the crowded hold, the scourge of the master as they toiled beneath a tropical sun. These white slaves were worth on an average £10 each, and the Queen, Mary d'Este, profiting by her people's misery, claimed a hundred of them, so clearing about £1,000. No wonder that her ladies-in-waiting were ready enough to take the unfortunate flag-maidens of Taunton as their Christmas-box, or that their agent, the Duke of Somerset, insisted that the poor maids should be kept in prison until fines amounting to £7,000 were paid for their release. It is gratifying to know that Sir Francis Warre of Hestercombe protested against such cruel greed, and that these Court ladies had to be content with £2,300, instead of £7,000. It was a proper retribution for all this wanton cruelty that his victory in 1685 only tempted the hard, insensate King to rush on more recklessly to his doom; and that when William III. landed at Torbay, November 5th, 1688, the hearts of all in the West Country were with him as the heart of one man.

[1] Burnet, in Savage's *Taunton*, p. 511.

The eighteenth century was a quiet time in Taunton, only disturbed by the rowdyism of contested elections, and the events recorded are of a very homely and peaceful kind. For instance, in 1709, the organ of St. Mary's was "built by subscription"; in 1711 a new clock and chimes were set up in St. Mary's; from 1745 to 1752 the pinnacles of St. Mary's tower were rebuilt; East Reach was paved in 1747; the county gaol was built here in 1755; and a hospital[1] that soon failed was built in 1772.

Using their new powers with energy, in 1769 the Market Trustees pulled down the old cross[2] and guildhall; then they cleared room for the parade, improved North Street and East Street, and in 1773 completed their new market-house with its arcades.

From a commercial point of view, Taunton was always chiefly important as an agricultural centre. Woollen manufactures, however, had flourished here, as in other western towns, since its introduction by Dutch immigrants in 1336, being stimulated by French exiles after the revocation of the edict of Nantes. During the eighteenth century this industry was drifting northward into Yorkshire; but in 1778 the loss was partly met by the introduction of silk-throwing, mainly due to that local patriot, Sir Benjamin Hammet, who, although he was a native and an Alderman of London, yet devoted himself to the interests of Taunton.

During the whole eighteenth century our local annals scarcely touch the fringe of our national history, and here only in matters ecclesiastical. The non-juring enthusiasm lost us a Vicar as well as a Bishop. In 1736, Walter

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1 Since 1807 the house and site have been occupied by Franciscan nuns. These had come over from Belgium at the French Revolution, being inmates of the English Franciscan house at Bruges, in which two nieces of Richard Whiting, the last Abbot of Glastonbury, had taken the veil. (Gasquet's *Last Abbot of Glastonbury*, p. 16, note 2.)

2 The new cross was erected by Dr. Kinglake, in memory of his parents, in 1867.

Harte, who had been Vicar of St. Mary's from 1683 to 1690, died in his retirement at Kentbury, Berkshire, at the great age of ninety-five. He was Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, Canon of Bristol, and Prebendary of Wells. He was deprived of his living in 1690 because he would not take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary; but this non-juring friend of our non-juring Bishop Ken, thanks to the kindness of that good Bishop's three successors, Kidder, Hooper, and Wynn, enjoyed the income of his prebend to the close of his long life.

Another and greater enthusiast, John Wesley, was preaching at our old market cross, August 26th, 1743, and on March 6th, 1776, he was opening our first Methodist meeting-house, the present octagon chapel in Middle Street.

During the nineteenth century, though the history of Taunton was equally uneventful, the progress of the town was more marked. In 1812 the hospital in East Reach was opened to commemorate the Jubilee of George III., and in 1887 a Nursing Institute was attached to it, in honour of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria.[1] In 1821 the new market was built; from 1822 the large room over the market was used as a reading club or "institution"; from 1849 it was the museum of the Somerset Archæological Society; and from the removal of the museum to the Castle in 1874 it has served as our School of Art. The Great Western Railway reached Taunton about sixty years ago, and is now joined here by four branch lines from Yeovil, Chard, Minehead, and Bideford. In 1881 the town was made the depôt of the first Somerset Regiment; and these causes, with the opening of several shirt and collar factories, have led to a great increase of population, especially in St. James' parish. In Church matters Taunton has been wholesomely influenced by the Oxford Movement, for since 1842, besides building

1 The Hospital was set on foot by Dr. Malachi Blake; the Nursing Institute by Dr. Edward Liddon.

four new churches—Holy Trinity, St. John's, St. Andrew's, and St. George's—we have partly rebuilt the churches of St. James and Wilton, restored St. Mary's, and wholly rebuilt the towers of St. Mary's, St. James', and Wilton.

Towards the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries there was much mental activity in Taunton, possibly stimulated by the near neighbourhood of Thomas Poole and his highly intellectual friends at Nether Stowey.

In 1791, Dr. Joshua Toulmin, minister of the chapel in Mary Street, published a carefully-compiled history of the town; and in 1822 this was much improved, in a second edition, by his successor, Mr. James Savage. On August 5th, 1809, Alexander William Kinglake, the genius of a clever family and the well-known author of *Eothen*, was born at The Lawn, Mary Street. In 1830, Edwin Norris, the great linguist and a member of a distinguished Taunton family, was offering his services to the Bible Society. In October, 1831, Sydney Smith, from Combe Florey, was making his immortal speech of Dame Partington and the Atlantic at a pro-reform meeting in Taunton. About the same time, Andrew Crosse, the pioneer in electrical science, would be riding in from Fine Court to attend the gatherings of the "Conversazione,"[1] an association started by some thoughtful young Tauntonians for mutual stimulus and criticism. In 1835, Benjamin Disraeli stood for Taunton in the Conservative interest, and was not returned. In the fifties, Professor Freeman would come over from his retreat at Wells to discourse to us on Somerset towers, and somewhat later to elucidate the history of "King Ine"; Thomas Hugo, the learned antiquary, and a native of Taunton, would descend upon us from Hackney with his elaborate chronicles of our priory; and various points of local

[1] The originators of the Conversazione were Sergeant Cox, his cousins, William and Henry Trenchord, and my father, Henry Alford.

interest were being discussed amongst us by Messrs. Francis Warre, W. F. Elliot, James Hurly Pring, and Cecil Smith.

Now and again, in the sixties, drawn hither by their relations resident in the town, Canon Liddon, most eloquent of modern preachers, and Dean Alford, a leader in Greek Testament criticism, would be occupying Taunton pulpits.

Since the recovery of its charter in 1877, Taunton has made steady progress; and now, with its sound system of drainage, its ample supply of pure water, its electric lighting, its pleasant park, three recreation grounds and county cricket ground, it can compare for modern improvements with any town of its size in the country.

D. P. ALFORD.

CHURCH TOWERS

By George Clinch

THE influence of material as a factor in determining the form of buildings was, of course, much more apparent in the past than in these modern times, when railways and other means of transit furnish a practically unlimited method of conveying to any spot every kind of stone or other species of building material which may be required. There can be no doubt, indeed, that the form of many of our old churches and other buildings has been governed by the character of the material employed in their construction. The round towers found in the churches of certain districts were doubtless due to the lack of suitable stone for the quoins which would be necessary for a square tower, and also the abundance of flints which were exactly suited for the construction of a circular tower. Wooded districts, too, where oaks grew, and where suitable building stone was not found—such, for example, as parts of the Wealden districts of Surrey, Sussex, and Kent—are, as one might imagine, notable for their fine timber-built church towers and roofs.

In addition to the question of materials, other factors, such as wealth, piety, and even fashion, have influenced in a very remarkable manner the form and ornamentation of churches. The notably fine churches of Romney Marsh in Kent, and in East Anglia, may be traced to the wealth arising from the wool trade, which these districts enjoyed in the Middle Ages, as well as to the piety of the people.

Church Tower, Huish Episcopi.

There are, in fact, many well-marked districts in which, from some such reasons as these, the churches bear special features—local peculiarities which are far more interesting to the archæologist and ecclesiologist than all the glories of modern church building and church decoration. It is, indeed, one of the main causes of lamentation among antiquaries that, from a variety of causes, chiefly improved methods of conveyance of material, this local character is so rarely found in our modern churches.

The church towers of Somerset, with which this brief article is particularly concerned, have long been recognised as presenting remarkable and interesting peculiarities. Yet, varied and elaborate as they are, it is by no means impossible to reduce them to a regular system of classification. Several attempts have already been made, but perhaps undue prominence has been given to minor points, whilst the broad and fine features have not received all the notice they deserve. However interesting from a purely architectural point of view it may be to trace the development and relationship of the many different types of towers, it is undoubtedly true that it is easy to carry an elaborate system of co-ordination and classification so far as to defeat the purpose of systematic study.

In the present sketch, therefore, it is proposed to deal mainly with some of the most beautiful examples of the Somerset church towers, to draw attention to their fine points, and to offer a few remarks which may possibly assist the reader to a fuller appreciation of a feature in mediæval architecture of which Somerset men and women may well be proud.

The remarkably fine series of church towers in this county, as already mentioned, has long been recognised. In the twenty-ninth volume of the *Proceedings* of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society there is a paper on "The Somerset Type of Church compared with that of some other Counties," by the late Mr. B. E. Ferrey, F.S.A. The author justly attributes the

superiority of the Somerset churches to the abundance and variety of local building materials. He writes:—

Though some of the quarries of the "Bath" stone are not actually in Somerset, they are so near the border that, with the others, they take their name from it. In the county is Doulting stone, used at Wells Cathedral and Glastonbury Abbey, a wonderfully durable material; Ham-Hill stone, ruddy-looking in its youth, calm-looking and grey, covered with lovely-tinted lichens, in its old age; the red sandstone of Bishop's Lydeard and that neighbourhood; the sober-coloured blue lias, too often, alas! treacherous and undurable, but forming the excellent paving-stones and steps of Keinton and Street; and the Pennant, quarried near Bristol. The blue lias also produces that splendid material, the lime of Watchet, almost equal in strength to Portland cement. Then there is the white lias, such as is found in the neighbourhood of Wells and Shepton Mallet, resembling Caen stone in its white colour and texture. This is the stone employed in the sculpture of the arch mouldings to the west front of Wells Cathedral. Then, last, though not least, there is that rich purplish-red conglomerate, or pudding-stone, called Draycott, which will take a half-polish like marble; and the semi-freestone of Wedmore may be added.

In addition to the excellence of Somerset stone as a building material, attention may be drawn to the beauty of colouring which several varieties display. The harmony of these variously tinted stones, with their natural surroundings of rural scenery, has been so well described by Mr. J. Ll. Warden Page[1] that we need offer no apology for the following brief extract:—

There is no jewel that is not improved by the setting; there is no building that does not gain by its surroundings, and, surely, not a little of the beauty of the towers of Somerset is due to the setting in which they are placed. Few counties in England can boast greater variety. In the north the towers—here, for the most part, of lighter tint than elsewhere—have for background the dark ranges of the Mendip stretching away mile after mile; in mid-Somerset they rise against the emerald pastures that lie between Glastonbury and Burnham and Langport—level expanses, broken here and there by abrupt island-like knolls; in the west, the red towers are overshadowed by the rounded hills of Quantock and Brendon and the wooded spurs of Exmoor.

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[1] *The Church Towers of Somerset.* A series of etchings and descriptive notes. 2 vols.

The typical Somerset church towers stand at the west of the nave, are square in plan, and unadorned by spires. They are mainly of Perpendicular architecture, and perhaps the majority of them belong to the latter part of that period. It might be expected that a large number of works of this kind of the same period and confined to one county would show a monotonous and wearying sameness, but it is exactly in this particular matter that the towers display so much merit. The Somerset towers, although admittedly bearing a family likeness, display, as a recent writer has expressed it, "an astonishing variety, due not to any difference of style, but solely to individuality of treatment. Abundant evidence is shown of the versatility and resource of the builders, all the more striking as being displayed at a time when Gothic architecture was already on the wane, and when its decline had actually begun elsewhere."

The towers had, if we may say so, far more than a fair share of attention bestowed upon them by their builders. Many of the finest examples belonged to quite ordinary and commonplace churches. This glorification of the tower is one of the most remarkable things about Somerset churches, and in order to account for it several suggestions have been offered. The presence of an excellent and abundant supply of building stone has just been mentioned, but this of itself is certainly not a sufficient explanation. Others have suggested that the towers were made specially large in order to accommodate the large peals of bells which came into vogue towards the end of the fifteenth century, but this, again, seems unable to explain the very elaborate character of the towers which were erected at this period, and the explanation would equally apply, one might imagine, to other counties and districts of England. Nor can we find anything to support the view, advanced by one writer, that pains, skill, and expense were lavished on the towers because of a change from the old-fashioned piety which had found expression

chiefly in the beautifying of the altars, chancel, and internal fittings of the churches, and in endowing charities.

The chief cause of the building of these magnificent church towers, we are inclined to think, was the influence of the noble architectural piles of Glastonbury and Wells. These beautiful churches inspired the Somerset masons to emulation, and a species of friendly rivalry between neighbouring parishes had the natural effect of causing them to do work of the finest character, though sometimes, perhaps, not without a suspicion of too laboured effort and too startling effect. Dundry, and, in a milder degree, St. Mary Magdalene's, Taunton, are examples of this kind of extravagance; the parapets and pinnacles are over-elaborated. This is a feature which has received praise from some critics, and there can be no question that the work involved great architectural skill and a certain species of refinement; but it is only necessary to compare them with such steeples as Staple Fitzpaine and Ilminster in order to see the defect to which we refer. There is a dignified feeling of repose and solidity about the two church towers last mentioned (a feeling mainly due, perhaps, to the unity and completeness of the builder's idea and the use of ornament in just proportion), which cannot fail to produce a pleasing and refreshing effect in the mind of the student, and, indeed, in the minds of all who see them. The influence of great buildings is far-reaching and subtle; and many people who never trouble to think about the matter, and who have certainly no pretension to possessing cultivated and intelligent appreciation of ancient architecture, are unquestionably affected and benefited by the presence of these beautiful old church towers mellowed by the delicate touches of hundreds of summers and winters, so that they have come to be a part of the actual land on which they stand, and almost a natural feature in the landscape which they adorn.

It is no part of the writer's purpose to enter upon the question of elaborate classification of the various types into

Church Tower, Staple Fitzpaine.

which it may be possible to divide the Somerset towers. This has been done already by other far abler pens, and, moreover, it seems possible that such a course would be destructive of the fuller and higher appreciation which regards from the standpoint of artistic rather than scientific criticism. The work of the mediæval builder was essentially artistic, and the hard rules of science have only an imperfect and indifferent relation to it. These fine old towers, therefore, should, we think, be drawn and printed and photographed; they should be studied and admired in a sympathetic spirit; they should be criticised; but they should not be classified into groups and sub-groups as if they were organisms in the kingdom of nature.

There are, of course, some of these towers so beautiful and so well-proportioned as to stand out prominently beyond the greater proportion of the church towers in the county, and to these a few words may be devoted.

SHEPTON MALLET.—This fine tower derives much of its real and apparent strength from a series of shapely and well-developed buttresses. The reason why the general mass of the tower is so pleasing to the eye is doubtless derived partly from these features suggestive of strength and solidity; but another almost equally pleasing element is the sparse yet sufficient use of ornamentation. The bold lines of the architecture are far finer in their present slightly ornamented character than they would have been if covered by diaper and pinnacle work.

EVERCREECH.—This tower is singularly elegant, and upwards of eighty feet in height. In the panels below the windows are ornaments which clearly show the influence of the work at Wells Cathedral.

HUISH EPISCOPI tower has been well described as a marvel of perfect form and completeness. The string courses or, rather, bands which divide it into three stages,

are richly sculptured with ornaments in the form of sunk quatrefoils.

STAPLE FITZPAINE.—This has already been referred to as a singularly happy example of good proportion and judicious ornament. It is so pleasing in every way that every part is worthy of praise, and no feature, as far as the writer is aware, affords opportunity for adverse criticism.

ILMINSTER.—In this tower, again, we find a great wealth of ornament, yet it is so skilfully disposed as not to interfere but rather heighten and emphasize the purely architectural features. It is obvious that it was inspired by the central tower of Wells Cathedral, the division of each face into three tall compartments and the general style of the pinnacles pointing unmistakably to this conclusion.

It is fortunate that a large series of important church towers such as this in Somerset has remained well preserved for so long. It is safe now, we may hope, for all time, because the Somerset people thoroughly appreciate and venerate these architectural monuments of the past, and it is inconceivable that they will ever suffer any preventable harm to befall them.

"LETTERS OF DOROTHY WADHAM"[1]

By the Rev. L. T. Rendell, M.A.

THIS little volume takes us back to the early years of the seventeenth century, and makes us think of a family then well known in Somerset, but coming originally from Devon, where they had seats at Knowstone and at Edge, near Branscombe. It appears that on the marriage of John Wadham, grandfather of Nicholas Wadham, with Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir Stephen Popham, of Ilton, they made Merrifield (her Dower house), near Ilminster, their chief abode, and thus in due time were reckoned as Somerset folk.

It is perhaps as well, before speaking of the contents of the book before us, to learn what we can of Ilminster, and something of the surroundings of the Somerset home where the generosity was developed and the seeds were sown of a purpose of which the outward and visible sign to-day is the College of Wadham in the University of Oxford.

Merrifield, then, was an old mansion (it has since, we believe, passed away) near the town of Ilminster, some twelve miles south-east of Taunton, and one of those old-world places of which there are not a few in England, and the county of Somerset has its fair quota.[2] These little towns are to be reckoned among the lesser charms

1 *Letters of Dorothy Wadham, 1609-1618.* Edited by the Rev. R. B. Gardiner. London, 1904.

2 Such as Ilminster, Ilchester, Somerton, and others.

of our country, and they have often had a not inglorious past. Their population was never large, but in the times when four or five millions represented the total of England, they had an importance which in modern days has never belonged to them. Once, perhaps, they were seats of a busy trade, as in woollens, etc., even venturing now and then to send their wares oversea; but with them, as with all things, times have changed, and "autres temps autres mœurs," trade has ever had a trick of shifting its moorings, and with the loss of their staple support, much of the external importance of these towns has vanished; yet they take themselves quite seriously still, liking to be called "market towns," though in actual population not much beyond what is often reached by villages nowadays.

It is not that they are evidently decayed or show signs of having "seen better days," for there is still in its way a brisk sort of life going on in them. Yet is there an ancient look about them; perhaps the old trade lingers yet, but it issues in small quantities, and its record only serves to swell the lesser rills that go to make up the Board of Trade returns.

In others of these towns are found remnants of a past, such as a market-place or even a town hall, which have, in their shrunken state, been turned to more ignoble uses. These are they which have boasted once of a Mayor and Corporation and other paraphernalia of civic dignity, returning, perhaps, one (or even two) Members to Parliament. To them the great Reform Bill (1832) proved fatal. They dropped at once in the scale of national life, they were denuded of all political distinction, and the limited population was no longer allowed the luxury of a Mayor and Corporation. They became "sadder" and possibly "wiser" communities, with the Parish Vestry and its posse of constables their sole emblem of power, their witness to the majesty of the law.

Again, there were those which derived importance from their proximity to a great abbey or religious house,

and, fostered by the care and protection of a powerful neighbour, they throve and prospered. It is now almost impossible—so much has happened since—to measure what these Abbeys were in their best days, and how they must have elevated the tone of the life around them.

The Abbey of Muchelney was near the town of Ilminster, and the Abbot was patron of the Parish Church. Several of the Abbots had been natives of the town, and the House was "lord of the manor," and as such, we may be sure, would have bestowed benefits with no niggard hand.

But a dark day came at length—

> Bluff Harry broke into the spence
> And turned the cowls adrift.

With the dissolution of the monasteries, the life of the neighbourhood must have stagnated for a while, and when the storm had blown over, towns like Ilminster found themselves on a lower level, and dwindling to a shadow of their former self. We have spoken of the "best days" of the abbeys, and no one wishes to forget that they had fallen—in the time of Henry VIII.—"from their high estate,"[1] but we have dwelt rather on the good the houses undoubtedly wrought, because one hopes that comparatively few look upon the spoliation of the Abbeys with complacency, and fewer still assert with confidence that the monks were *all* leading irregular lives.

But this is another matter. What we are concerned with here is that there is a special interest belonging to towns like Ilminster, rich as they often are in memories of the past. We are inclined to suggest that the tourist on reaching any such might well recall the words "Siste viator,"[2] for to those who have an interest in the past and a care for the realities of history these places are

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1 Gilbert White, in his *History of Selborne*, speaks of the Commission of Enquiry sent out by Thomas Cromwell as under a bias to misrepresent the state of things they found.

2 "Stay, traveller."

worth much notice. We do not wish to be censorious, but it is just in this respect that the modern traveller is at fault: rapid and easy means of communication have developed the feeling that speed is all in all, and to look, as it were, below the surface is, to say the least, distasteful. . . .

Let us think of the name as we reach the town of Ilminster. It means "The Church on the river Ile," and we probably can gather from it that the church was the first and chief glory of the town, as indeed it remains to the present day. Let us go into the church, and see what it has to tell us. We learn that the Wadham family were kind and generous inhabitants, and that a considerable portion of the parish church (the tower, transepts, and porch) were built by Sir William Wadham late in the fifteenth century (*temp.* Henry VII.). There is a monument, too, to Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham, of marble, blended with stone of the district. Their portraits are here, graven in brass, and an inscription at the foot records their charity and the outward manifestation of it in the founding of a college "trans Isida." It is these two last named that the book with which we are concerned introduces us to. The confiscation of the Abbey of Muchelney must have taken place when Nicholas and Dorothy were children, and they must have heard much of what happened, and how very many had good cause to regret the loss of their whilom neighbours, the Abbot and brethren of Muchelney.

Dorothy Wadham, we may here record, was born in 1533 (the same year as Elizabeth). As a child and young woman she had passed through the storm cycle of the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary. She was married in 1555; she and her husband lived all through the reign of Elizabeth; she died in the latter part of the reign of James I., and nine years after her husband, so they had both been witnesses of the "hurly-burly" that shook England in the sixteenth century, and, alike from their

position and temperament, were quite able to estimate the net result of the group of events known as "the Reformation."

It was near the town of Ilminster, then, that Nicholas Wadham and his wife lived their long married life, dispensing a noble hospitality, such as Fuller is moved to write of, "making their home an inn at all times, a court at Christmas." Are we wrong in supposing that the wise and generous hospitality of Merrifield was largely prompted by a recollection of what had been, and a desire to do what in them lay to make up for what was lost[1] in the passing away of the great religious house at Muchelney? We have, then, in some way to imagine Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham as living a life of quiet yet discerning charity, and in those surroundings there grew up in the mind of Nicholas—for they had no family—a desire to carry out a scheme which should be of lasting good, and perchance would serve to keep their memory green. The plan of making some gift which would be of permanent value seems to have been long brooded over. At one time, Nicholas is said to have had the idea (though doubt has been thrown on this) of founding a college at Venice, but the legend (it appears to be nothing more) has been largely discredited of late, and there would have been practical difficulties in the way that cannot be ignored. At any rate, long before Nicholas Wadham died (1609) his wishes had finally taken shape, viz., to erect a college at Oxford, and the plan was subsequently carried out by his wife, Dorothy, who was seventy-five years of age when she was left a widow.

How she fulfilled this task it is the purpose of this volume to show. It is nothing more than a collection of about thirty-eight letters, proving how loyal she was to her husband's will, how determined to see to the arrangement

[1] It is matter of history that the loss of the generous care exercised by the Abbeys throughout England was the direct cause of the beginning of the English "Poor Law."

and carrying out of the statutes of the college, and to erect its buildings, just as he had planned and would himself have desired, so that the book has more than a slight interest and far beyond what its mere size would imply. We find here a picture of the actual infancy of a college, the only case (as far as we know) of any record of the first beginnings, the start of a new foundation.

Wadham is practically the latest of the old colleges of Oxford.[1] The two other colleges that were started later had been for many generations parts of the University. Pembroke (1624) had been previously Broadgates Hall, and dates from 1422. Worcester College (1714) had been before known as Gloucester Hall, starting from 1283. Wadham, however, was an entirely new foundation. Buildings and statutes alike were erected and drawn up early in the seventeenth century (1613), and what is equally noteworthy, the College has hardly been altered since. The only additions are some detached buildings. The main portions are exactly as when they were completed by the builders, close on three hundred years ago.[2]

We are accustomed to think that the days of the opening of the seventeenth century were critical, and to those then living this must have been even more obvious. The storm of the Reformation had hardly subsided, its effects were widely felt still, and the futile "Gunpowder Plot" a few years before probably told very many that there were elements of danger yet existing.

The style of the college buildings reproduces with remarkable fidelity the work of the fifteenth century, so much so that even experts in architecture have been deceived as to their date. We read that workmen in stone and carpenters were brought up from Somerset, either from necessity or from a patriotic feeling on the part

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1 Keble College, founded in 1871, is exceptional, and stands necessarily by itself.

2 We quote Fuller again: "Wadham is of all the colleges in Oxford the most uniform."

Silver Medal of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham.

of the foundress. It is, at all events, a tribute to the skill of the West Country workmen, and we are not surprised to find that in some of the details features are reproduced of the domestic architecture of Somerset of those days.

In all the letters, the strong individuality of the "foundress" (as she repeatedly calls herself) comes out, and it is at least worthy of record that statutes framed three hundred years ago should have enacted two principles that are generally regarded as nineteenth century developments: we allude to the period fixed for the tenure of fellowships[1] and to the absence of any requirement of Holy Orders as a condition of holding a Fellowship. This is perhaps more remarkable when found to include the office of Warden.

Reading the letters, one is impressed by the methodical and tactful disposition of Dorothy Wadham, and the firm way in which she asserted for eight or nine years her full authority, not only technically, but actually, holding the reins of power. In fact, "Dux femina facti" is an obvious and (we hope) not unkind comment, for she had a trust to carry out, and she would not be backward in the discharge of it. Again, a marked desire is shown to insist upon the religious side of the life of the Fellows, and so of the College itself, as in her frequent injunctions to "unitie" and the repeated mention of "charitie," as in "without true charitie there cannot be true societie." All this insistence upon the importance of the social side of life is really, we fancy, an echo and the natural outcome of the old home life at Merrifield, where, though Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham were not much "in public affairs," yet they were keenly conscious (as we have noted) of the value of the old precept: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." The frequent insistence upon unity it is

1 It was at first ten years; later, but still in the foundress's life, it was extended to twenty years (1614).

impossible to separate from our knowledge of what had happened in the previous seventy years. Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham had seen enough of strife and controversy to be able to appreciate the value of charity.

Her sense of the importance of discipline is very marked; any independence on the part of the Fellows was against the obedience due to her ("the foundress"). With it we cannot but call attention to her readiness to accept, where possible, the will of "my society," as well as her resolute action, if such seemed to be called for. We find, again, in a postscript (Letter xii.) the words: "I would have prayers and fasting days dewly observed."[1]

As a sign of her thorough care for the well-being of the College, take her remark that "the Chaplain's place is paynful and troublesome beyond all others," where "paynful" evidently means that which calls for especial pains and is full of difficulty. To illustrate the care she bestowed even on small details, we find her in one letter making an enquiry as to some carved figures that were ordered for the Chapel, adducing (curiously enough) as a reason that they would "show for what purpose it (the Chapel) was appointed."

The letters are all signed by Dorothy herself, but only three or four are in her own handwriting. She appears to have employed as her secretary one John Arnold, of whom we know nothing, and can only guess that he seems to have been her confidential agent; he may have been a relation.

It adds in a way to the curiosity of the book that the contents wear a sort of old-world shape: written close on three hundred years ago, they give plain indications of the changes time has brought. The phrases sound to us precise, even to stiffness, and some of the words

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[1] We hope it is not flippant, but in this connection the modern saying occurs to us about "a lady's letter, and where the pith of it is to be found"! At all events, the direction thus given is manifestly of no trivial concern.

evidently bore meanings then which would hardly be accepted now; while there are points of orthography (spelling, etc.) which would not pass muster in these latter days, and are proof—if such be needed—that the English language was yet "in the making." But these are minor considerations. What is important is the picture here given of a woman sincere in the fulfilment of her husband's purpose, possessed, too, with so full a sense of the higher side and aims of life that she was able to rise above any ill effects of controversy, such as she had passed through; and we find no exultation, as over a victory won, no regrets, as for something lost.[1]

Dorothy Wadham is said to have once, in the reign of James I., fallen under the suspicion of "recusancy," but we look upon that, if true, merely as a passing cloud. She was doubtless, in the best sense of the word, "conformable" to the Church of England, and we prefer to recall the inscription in Ilminster Church, speaking of this "noble pair," and setting forth both the generosity that had marked the lives of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham and the simplicity and genuineness of their faith.

L. T. RENDELL.

1 It is recorded, and seems worth noting, that Dorothy Wadham never saw the College. Is that to be regarded as evidence of her tact?

CORYATE AND HIS CRUDITIES

By the Rev. L. T. Rendell, M.A.

THOMAS CORYATE, once well known as a traveller and wit, was a native of Odcombe, a parish three miles west of Yeovil and six miles north-east of Crewkerne. He was the son of the Rev. George Coryate,[1] Rector of Odcombe, and was born in the parsonage there in 1577. His father was Prebendary of York, and celebrated in his day for his fine taste in literature, especially Latin poetry. He died in 1606, and was buried in the chancel of Odcombe Parish Church. His son—the subject of this memoir—appears, for some queer whim of his own, to have kept his father's body above ground more than a month before the funeral was carried out.

Only a few details are known of Thomas Coryate's early life. He entered at Gloucester Hall[2] in 1596, but here, though he is said to have acquired a considerable knowledge of Latin and Greek, and to have become "a proficient in Logic," he never took any degree. Those were days in which discipline was lax, and students, even in name, few; and the inborn eccentricity of Thomas Coryate's mind may well be thought to have kept him outside any regular course of study. He left the University before the end of the century, and returned to his old home at Odcombe, where he remained for several

1 The name is spelt variously—Coriate, Coryat, Coryate, and even Coryet; but folk in those days were not worried by questions of orthography, especially in the matter of proper names.

2 Now Worcester College.

years, externally, it would seem, leading an aimless life, but doubtless (in his own way) learning, and perhaps unconsciously preparing himself for the years that were to follow. Now may have been manifested the beginnings of the powers of endurance and energy of which later he was to give such remarkable proof. We may well now think of him as storing up materials, at odd moments, for the "admirable fluency in the Greek tongue," with which he is credited by the historian Fuller.

After a while, Odcombe possibly proving too small for his energies, he went to London, and apparently soon found himself attached to the family of the Prince of Wales. How he succeeded in thus getting his foot on the ladder of advancement we are not told, but from a letter (written in later life) to Sir Robert Phillips, of Montacute, near Yeovil, whom he addresses as "once my Mæcenas," we may conjecture that it was through his influence he obtained an introduction at Court.[1]

Of his personality now we seem to gleam a little knowledge. We are told that his appearance was "comic"; to quote Fuller again, "he carried folly in his face," and so he filled a niche, rather above, yet not altogether unlike, that of a jester, with which Courts in earlier days were usually equipped. He was a butt for the wit of the courtiers; yet, unlike Samson when made sport of by the Philistines, he gave as good as he got—he more than held his own. His gift of ready repartee, his marvellous memory, that was already beginning to assert itself, and a sort of recklessness that was part of his character, not only made him a welcome figure at Court, but found him a recognised place in the establishment of the young Prince, who is said to have had much regard for him, and to have procured him a pension at last. It is a slight matter, but in its way a token that he was quite a personality in those days, and as such remembered

1 Subsequently Sir R. Phillips was appointed Master of the Rolls.

after he was gone, we read that Coryate, travelling in India in later years, met a merchant from England, who told him that King James had asked about him, saying, characteristically, "Is that fool still alive?" Tom was much chagrined at the form taken by the royal recollection, but we are inclined to set it down to his credit; and knowing what history tells us of the King, we may well read beneath the question a sort of regard, which he chose to disguise under bluntness of speech.

After his father's death, having inherited a small property, he determined to travel, and set forth (in 1608), leaving Dover on May 14th.

So begins what we may call the serious portion of his life, for it is as a traveller and keen observer that he most deserves to be remembered, and we fancy so he would wish, for in a dedication of his book to the Prince of Wales, he speaks of travel as "of all pleasures in the world the sweetest and most delightful." The tour so commenced lasted just five months, and in the course of it he visited many cities on the Continent—Paris, Lyons, Turin, Milan, Venice, etc.—forty-five in all, as he takes pains to recall—travelling altogether 1,975 miles, now and then in a cart, on a boat, on horseback. The homeward route was accomplished mainly on foot. He reached London on October 3rd.

After his return, he was for several years occupied in preparing for publication the vast amount of information he had collected. He had at the outset to face several difficulties, *e.g.*, to find a bookseller who would print and friends who would patronise. Eventually, he had his way, and the book was issued in London (printed by one T. Thorp), and was heralded by a collection of verses in praise of the volume. These he had got together by soliciting the aid of a number of men of eminence—as many as forty-five, among them Ben Jonson—and at the end of this strange farrago was printed a most incongruous tag—a posthumous collection of his father's verses.

Odcombe Church—Interior.

The following is, in brief, the title page of this perhaps the oddest volume ever printed. It is quite characteristic of the man, full of his rollicking, reckless humour:—

Tom Coryate's crudities, hastily gobbled up, and newly digested in the hungry air of Odcombe in the County of Somerset, and now dispersed for the nourishment of the travelling members of this Kingdom.

On another page he speaks of the "Odcombian banquet, dished up by Thomas the Coriat, and served up by a number of noble wits, in praise of his crudities and cranks too."

The volume, despite its whimsical title, had its serious aspect, for it sets forth with much fulness, and not a little method, the notes of what he had seen, and his reflections on the places he had visited. In this, and in his expressed desire to encourage travel, he was the forerunner of the many "handbooks" and "guides" that have been issued since in such profusion; while for accuracy and completeness of purpose his volume will not suffer by comparison with similar and later publications.

It is not easy to see how his notes could ever have been put together, so full of detail are they, and so scrupulously exact. Thus he records the hour of his arrival and his departure from each place, and (to take only one instance) after his account of the well-known Strasburg clock—itself a triumph of minute mechanical skill—he goes on to record that "these few observations" were put together in less than half-an-hour, "with no man's assistance, where I doubted, and at last actually hurried by the sexton, who was preparing to close the door." In preserving and reproducing his observations, he must (in fact) have been aided by a singularly exact memory, an infinite patience, as well as complete familiarity with the languages of various countries.

What comes out clearly at every turn is the man's keen patriotism: in all his wanderings, he is still *a Somerset man.* He reaches Calais, and is at pains to set

down the number of miles he is from his beloved Odcombe; so with Venice, the climax of the tour—it is the distance from Somerset that is reckoned.

In St. Mark's Cathedral he notes the pavement, finds it "of brick," a "sort of ashlar, as we call it in Somerset." The halls of great houses are contrasted with those in Somerset, as of Sir E. Phillips, of Montacute, "within a mile of Odcombe, my sweet native soil"; so later, when he finds himself near the Indus, he describes it as "twice as broad as the Thames in London." Lastly (by way of moral) he adds to his description of the clock before referred to that what he has set down is "for an encouragement to some wealthy fraternity to do the like for Paule's Church, for the better ornament of the City of our famous island of Great Britain."

The book was embellished by engravings of various noteworthy spots, as of the cathedral of Strasburg, as well as a sketch of the clock. The frontispiece is well known, and is characteristic, Coryate himself being represented on an elephant. These engravings are now valuable, being counted as rare and excellent specimens of the graver's skill.

No sooner was the book launched on the public than he seems to have conceived the idea of further travel, and this time for a long period—ten years. His departure (in 1612) was noted by the delivery of an oration at the market cross of Odcombe, and a ceremony was enacted (curiously appropriate to his nature) in the hanging up, in a sort of mock heroic style, in the Parish Church, of the shoes in which he had trudged so many miles.[1]

The tour so begun—his last and most extensive—appears to have comprised the greater part of the world, as then known. To sum it up in briefest fashion, he went

1 These were still *in situ* early in the eighteenth century. It is, perhaps, a memorable instance of the vanity of "fame," that Anthony à Wood, in 1746, visiting Odcombe, was told that a great traveller had once lived there, but he could learn nothing else about him.

to Constantinople, up the Nile to Cairo, through the Holy Land to the Dead Sea—"that most uncomfortable lake" he calls it—to Greece, Asia Minor, on to Mesopotamia, where he stood on the mounds of Nimrod (Nineveh), through Persia to Candahar, Lahore, and Agra. At the last-named place he passed away, some months after his arrival, and "of his sepulchre no man knoweth," as was written of a greater than he.

Of the later journeyings no regular records exist: all his notes and diaries perished with him; but he kept himself "in evidence," so to speak, by letters written from time to time to old friends of all sorts and degrees. Some of these got printed, and they are full of the strong personality of Thomas Coryate. Flashes of his bold wit break out now and then in queer dedications; thus: "Thomas Coryate to his friends in England sendeth greeting." He styles himself "Traveller for the English Wits," even ending one dedication with the comical title given to himself: "The legge-stretcher of Odcombe."

He developed as the years passed on a truly marvellous facility for acquiring languages, and he would prolong his stay in a place in order to equip himself with this requisite knowledge. At the Court of the Great Mogul he became such a proficient that he made a speech in "the vulgar tongue" there, which won him great fame and consideration.

What were the chief features of the character of this extraordinary man? We have noted his whimsical nature, his love of oddity, his frolicsomeness, which marked him from the first and remained with him all the days of a life that was, in the fullest sense of the word, unconventional. But over and above these, which represent, in the main, superficial qualities, there were others of a higher sort, which underlay an exterior apparently frivolous. He had, it should be remembered, rare qualities, and his merits as a traveller, linguist, and antiquarian were of the first order. We have spoken of

the way in which his being an adept at languages was made to subserve the great purpose of his life, viz., to be a traveller with the purpose of helping others to travel.

"Qualis ab initio talis ad finem" is a necessary, almost obvious, comment on the record of Thomas Coryate. His days may well have been shortened by his incessant journeyings. He was only about forty-six when he died. It speaks much for his resolution and strength of will that he could face, year after year, all that travel must have implied in those days. Through toilsome paths, with few or no regular means of communication, in varying climates, he held on his course, with the avowed object of "infusing a love of travel into transmarine nations." In all his wanderings he never ceased to be a man of Somerset. In one of the many letters that he sent home, he sets it down as among his desires that men may come to recognise "the felicity of our Somerset shire, that in breeding me she has produced such a traveller as, for the diversity of the countries he has seen, and the multiplicity of his observations, doth far outstrip any other," and playing with homely wit on the name of Odcombe, he surmises that one day his parish may well fulfil its name as having produced "an Odde man, that hath not his equal."

L. T. RENDELL.

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ADMIRAL BLAKE

By the Rev. L. T. Rendell, M.A.

ROBERT BLAKE, the famous Admiral, was born in 1599, being a son of Humphrey Blake, a merchant of Bridgwater. He was educated at the school in his native town, and at seventeen years of age went to Oxford, matriculating at St. Alban's Hall, whence he migrated, a year later, to Wadham College, then but lately founded through the munificence of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham, two worthies of Somerset. Blake was known at Oxford for habits of early rising and regular study, the latter varied by the sports of fowling and fishing. In due course he took the ordinary degrees, and finding life at the University congenial, he stood for a Fellowship at Merton College. In this he was unsuccessful—"happily," as one of his biographers puts it. He remained, however, at Oxford some five years longer, and became well read in Greek and Latin. It is spoken of as one of his characteristics in later years that he was fond, even in the busy times of his campaigns, of quoting from his favourite authors, so the literary tastes he showed, as a young man, never left him; the flavour (so to speak) of his early training remained, even in far other surroundings.

In 1625 his father died. Robert returned to Somerset, when it was found necessary, for the support of the family, that he should carry on the business of a merchant. In this capacity he lived some fifteen years, taking, no doubt, a part in county affairs. He served for some while in a militia regiment, and gradually came

into public life, and sat in the "Short Parliament" as Member of Parliament for Bridgwater. He was again returned (in 1645) for the same place, on the expulsion of Colonel Windham, but he made no mark in the world of politics, and we hear little of him in that capacity. Later, he was given a command in the army of the Parliament in the Civil War that had then broken out. His sympathies had always been with the Puritan party, and the tendency may have been fostered, even in the Oxford days, by the growth which he must have noticed of the influence of Laud in the University.

Two events are prominent in his military life: his defence of Lyme Regis, in Dorset, where, with a small garrison and great disadvantages of position, he succeeded in infusing such spirit into the defenders that the Royalist attacks were again and again defeated, and the delay of three months thus caused was of immense importance to the ultimate success of the Parliament. Fame of a similar sort was gained in the resolute stand he made in the siege of Taunton. His action at Lyme Regis had been noteworthy and gallant; at Taunton, it was (to use a modern phrase) "the same, only more so," the mercantile and geographical importance of the latter place affording an opportunity for even greater distinction.

Before very long, "a change came o'er the spirit of his dream." In 1648 a portion of the Fleet mutinied, and passed over to the Prince of Wales, and in the efforts that were made by Parliament to put naval matters on a surer basis, Colonel Blake, with two others, were nominated as admirals.

To explain this seeming anomaly, it is perhaps well to consider the history of those days. The struggle between England and Holland, in which Blake took so prominent a part, was not for the conquest of one nation by another, but simply to maintain (or assert) the command of the Channel. It was the climax of a rivalry that had begun nearly fifty years before. Holland, in the

middle of the seventeenth century, had more shipping and perhaps greater wealth than any other state, while England in those days had a relatively small navy, and had to supply the deficiency, as far as could be, with armed merchantmen. The life and death struggle that ensued had, at any rate, one result—it laid the foundation of our English Navy, and the strange fact has to be recorded that the men who were the first "sea dogs" were landsmen for a considerable part of their lives. The struggle with Holland first revealed to England her power as a seafaring nation, the consciousness of which would seem to have been dormant previously. Thus the navy became, after Blake's time, more of a profession, demanding special training and experience, while the experiment of appointing land officers to command at sea was seldom tried again, and never with anything like success. The distinction between "the sister services" now began to be recognised as essential, and has gone on to the present day.[1]

It stands, then, as a matter of history that Robert Blake, when forty-nine years old, first took command at sea, having previously been (as we have seen) an Oxford graduate, a militia officer, and a colonel in the Army. Lord Macaulay, in his history, gives many instances of this practice of early days, perhaps the most noteworthy being Sir Walter Raleigh, who had served as an officer in the Army long before he rose to fame as a seaman. A story was long current in the Navy that, on one occasion, Monk—who had been bred to the Army—was in command of a ship, and wishing the vessel to alter its course, gave the order, which must have sounded droll enough, "Left wheel."

In the case of Blake, however, we must recall that he was a merchant in his earlier years, and that would imply, not that he spent his days in an office, busy with correspondence, familiar with the sight of huge ledgers,

[1] There was no special uniform for the Navy till the middle of the eighteenth century—a hundred years later.

but he may well have navigated his own vessels, even as, when a boy, he may have heard and seen much of sailors, and learned something of the ways of those "who go down to the sea in ships." The merchant vessels of those days invariably carried guns,[1] for pirates were many and ships-of-war few. It was a current saying in the Navy in the seventeenth century that "English merchantmen must know how to take care of themselves."[2]

Blake's naval career only lasted for eight years, yet it was crowded with stirring actions. Witness the battles fought against Prince Rupert and the struggle maintained against the Dutch, in which at last he was victorious. The culminating point of his life as a sailor was the exploit at Santa Cruz, off Teneriffe, when he destroyed the Spanish treasure ships. Little enough is remembered, or known, of it, yet it was sufficiently noteworthy, taken by itself, as a foundation for fame. Roughly speaking, this was the manner of it. The English fleet, led by Blake, attacked the Spanish fleet, in a harbour commanded by large forts, captured and set fire to the ships of war, silenced the guns on shore, and finally, having destroyed the whole treasure, sailed out of the bay, with all the English ships and a loss of less than two hundred men.[3]

There is a recorded saying of Lord Nelson that Blake (in this action) "owed more to the wind coming off the shore than to any exertions of his own," and the remark is curious, because the same scene which witnessed Blake's crowning exploit was the scene of Nelson's one failure. It has to be borne in mind, however, that Blake's illness at the time, and his death before he landed in

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1 As the East Indiamen used to do, far into the eighteenth century.

2 Blake's unbroken success at sea has been explained as being the development in middle life of a latent aptitude, or as largely the result of his practical experience as a merchant in earlier years.

3 For this gallant feat the Parliament voted "Thanks" to Blake, and a sum of five hundred pounds to purchase a jewel to be given him. It may be concluded he received it, but nothing is known, and he died three months later, just as his vessel anchored in Plymouth Sound.

Statue of Robert Blake, at Bridgwater.

England, prevented his account of the battle being given; while for a long while the alleged critical change of the wind was too much dwelt upon, and so became exaggerated, the Puritan mind being especially prone to assign any unexpected result to a direct interposition of Providence. It seems wiser to argue from what we know, and to say that Blake's coolness and sound judgment doubtless enabled him to see chances of striking a successful blow which ordinary people would have been unconscious of. The occurrence of a land breeze in what was, after all, a fairly open harbour, may not have been so uncommon a thing. This Blake may have anticipated, and so he relied on skill and good seamanship for the carrying out of what was certainly a daring plan.[1]

We seem to know Blake's personal appearance—short of stature, thick-set in build, as though designed for a sea captain, but the portraits of him differ, being, in fact, not a little doubtful in their origin. Some are palpably erroneous in claiming to be likenesses. There is one, dated 1552, which is said to be genuine; it is (or was) in the possession of Dr. Cordwent, of Milverton.

The materials for a biography of Robert Blake are scanty; very few contemporary records exist. There are a few mentions of him in Parliamentary papers, and some letters (despatches) of his, but all of a public and formal sort. We lighted not long ago on a broadsheet called "Epitaph of Robert Blake," which perhaps deserves a passing notice, for it is dated 1658. The copy we saw was "Second Edition." As far as it goes, it is evidently a record of the day, and in the outline it gives of his life and personal characteristics has a certain value, over and above the token it furnishes of the appreciation and

1 It should be borne in mind that Blake made no signal mistake in his naval career; and his quickness of judgment as well as his knowledge of the sea are quite as much parts of his character as his determination and courage in action.

regard he had earned among his countrymen. The heading in large letters speaks of him as famous, because coming of an ancient stock,[1] no less than from his own merits, not only very learned in philosophy, but skilled to a high degree in mathematics and music; well trained, too, in war, having been in command (*Tribunus*) for fifteen years, and at length called to the Council of His Serene Highness Oliver. Significantly enough, after his name, the word "Thalassiarchæ"[2] occurs, as though implying that his last state was greater than his first; his latest work, as a sailor, was held to be more prominent than his earlier, as a soldier.

The paper (it is about eighteen inches by twelve inches) was printed anonymously, and has a double mourning line all round the edge. Following the heading we have noted is a sketch, written in Latin elegiacs, setting forth the chief features of his life and exploits. Mention is made of his literary tastes, his skill in classics, and his general love of books. The fact is dwelt upon that he was a conqueror on land, and then transferred his glory to the sea. The marvel of the victory at Santa Cruz is hinted at, as though "the winds were eager to waft his vessels into safety"; and so this bit of old-world chronicle goes along, ending with the "last scene of all," his passing "to the shores of heaven" when in sight of his native land.

It is not easy to say how this came to be printed, or how it was distributed.[3] It is possible that a copy may have been ordered to be fixed on the door of the

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1 It was long a cherished belief in Somerset that it was one of Humphrey Blake's ships that was the first to observe the approach of the Armada as it sailed up the Channel (1588).

2 *i.e.*, "General at Sea," as the current phrase then was.

3 The fact that it is "writ in a language long gone by" need not cause very much surprise, for Latin was (in the seventeenth century) more familiar than it has since been. It is no uncommon thing to find the entries in Parish Registers at this period written in Latin; and the document to which we have been referring was evidently put together with a purpose, and intended to express a public appreciation of a great man.

Parish Church at Bridgwater, and perhaps in London at the Abbey, etc. It is only a guess, but copies may also have been given away at the funeral, which, it is well known, was carried out, by the order of Parliament, with all possible solemnity and pomp. He was laid in Westminster Abbey, and in the chapel of Henry VII.[1]

We pass on to think of the "inwardness" of such a life as Blake's, for after all the personal characteristic is the essential thing, the chief factor in a life, whether humble or exalted. We can remember him as a Puritan, "ideal rather than typical," as has been remarked, strict and brave, but without the narrowness and self-righteousness that tend to repel a close consideration of their characters. Strong though his convictions were, steady as was his adherence to the cause of the Parliament, he still never allowed his military service to be narrowed or warped by outside considerations; on one occasion he refused, as an admiral, to join some political combination, brushing aside the suggestion with the characteristic reply: "It is our business to keep the foreigner from fooling us."[2]

Blake was one in whom complete confidence was always felt, and in the re-organization of the Navy that was carried out by Cromwell he was given an uncontrolled authority in the dockyard.

His seamanship, be the defects in his training real or imaginary, was at all events, and judged by results,

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1 Not a little rather acrid comment has been made on the removal of Blake's remains at the Restoration. Dean Stanley (*Memorials of Westminster*) has pointed out that he was the first hero (military or naval) to be buried in the Abbey, and we fancy the truth is that the place was thought to be unsuitable, and the exhumation of his body was ordered, to find a more fitting resting-place in the churchyard, and no indignity was intended, or offered, to his memory.

2 Blake's name does not appear among the Regicides; he considered the execution of the King "barbarous and illegal." When Cromwell became Lord Protector, Monk and Drake sent in their adhesion, but Blake refrained—to be loyal to the Commonwealth was enough for him. The character of Oliver Cromwell was probably too wily for close co-operation with Robert Blake.

vigilant and effective. He carried out what hitherto had been regarded as impossible—the plan of remaining at sea for a year or more, if need so required it. The bull-dog tenacity with which he would keep watch on an enemy's fleet, and his alertness in procuring information as to their movements, irresistibly reminds us of Nelson and his persistent pursuit of and watchfulness against the movements of the French fleet.

It was Blake who drew up a regular system of rules, controlling and regulating life at sea. Just as we have spoken of the Dutch war as virtually creating the English Navy, so it was Blake's methods and the changes he set on foot that virtually re-organized the working of the Navy, alike in the arrangement of the vessels, the manner of fighting, and the care taken of the men at sea.

"Colonel Blake," as he was affectionately styled, was in all things a loyal Bridgwater man, and would buy his stores, when possible, in his native town; if stationed at Plymouth, would get his men, bread, cheese, and beer from Somerset.

As a commander, he was daring, even to rashness; it was a maxim of his, long remembered, "to waste no powder on long bowls, but to come to close quarters at once." This, again, recalls the "Nelson touch," of which we have been hearing so much of late. This was the secret of his success in the struggle with the Dutch, for their ships were of light draught, and but slightly built. They relied chiefly on numbers. The English vessels, on the other hand, were stoutly built and larger, and less likely to suffer from violent impact. The Dutch, too, though better at navigation, were inferior in gunnery, and it was this last that, as a rule, decided battles.

When Blake started on his last expedition, he was too ill—from a neglected wound—to go, but his country called him, and go he must; his name, like that of Nelson later, was worth many ships.

How has it happened that a character so exalted and

pure,[1] a commander so resolute and successful, occupies a comparatively obscure place in history? We hazard a guess. The Restoration of the King brought with it—perhaps inevitably—a strong revulsion of feeling, an abhorrence of what had lately been, and in the flowing tide of loyalty the name and fame of those who had stood by the Parliament were swept into discredit, if not oblivion; so the renown of Blake suffered eclipse, little was said of him—he was a Puritan, and that was a signal for dislike.

The following seems an example. In the picturesque pages of Pepys' Diary, under the date June 1st, 1664, we read:—

> Mr. Coventry discoursed largely and bravely to me of the different sorts of valour, the active and the passive; of the latter he instanced General Blake, who in the defence of Lyme and Taunton, did through his sober sort of valour, defend it the most opiniastrément that ever man did anything, and yet never was the man that made an attaque by land or sea, but avoided it on all even fair occasions, while Prince Rupert was the boldest attaquer in the world for personal courage.

We take this to be mere and sheer prejudice: no doubt Pepys took pleasure in putting it down, but it is hard to believe that the fame of Blake can have been thus early obscured.[2] The battle of Santa Cruz is a sufficient answer. It is better—prejudice apart—to look at the facts of Blake's life, and to believe that his absolute simplicity, his well-tried courage, and his perfect patriotism constitute him a hero indeed, and for all time.

L. T. RENDELL.

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1 Blake died worth practically no more than the modest fortune he had inherited from his father.

2 The action at Santa Cruz was fought in April, 1657, only seven years before the conversation here recorded.

WILLIAM DAMPIER

NAVIGATOR AND BUCCANEER

By the Rev. Charles Powell, B.A.

DAMPIER was one of the world's great sailors, a man who, notwithstanding great faults, deserves to be remembered for singular ability, remarkable powers of observation, and wonderful capacity of work and endurance. Those who have followed him in the paths of discovery, or have had occasion to test the truth of his observations, give him honourable praise for exactitude, learning, and sound judgment. He has himself given a brief account of his early life. He wrote a full account of his first voyages, together with a treatise on winds and currents. His style is straightforward and manly, with its vigour carrying along the reader's interest, and never leaving any doubt as to the author's meaning.

In the seventeenth century, the Dampiers were settled as tenant farmers in the parish of East Coker, in Somerset. Many members of the family, both young and adult, died of the great plague which, in the year 1645, in three months carried off seventy inhabitants of the village.

"William, the sonne of George Dampier and Ann his wife," was baptized September 5th, 1651. "William, the sonne of William Dampier and Joane his wife," was baptized June 8th, 1652. Both the above entries are on the same page of the Parish Register. The former most probably refers to the future great sailor.

The boy William Dampier attended a Latin school (Bruton), but as he was bent on seeing the world, his guardians early removed him from school, and apprenticed him to the master of a ship of Weymouth. His youth was sufficiently adventurous. He made voyages to France and Newfoundland; returned to Coker; made a "long and warm" voyage from London to Java and back. Again he returned to Coker, and stayed during the summer of 1672 on his brother's farm. When next he went to sea, he was on board a man-of-war, the *Royal Prince*. In the summer of 1673 he was engaged in two great fights with the Dutch, and watched a third from the comparative safety of a hospital ship. After peace was made, he returned once more to Coker, and recovered his health on his brother's farm.

Colonel Helyar, of Coker Court, offered to give him the management of a plantation in Jamaica, under the superintendence of a certain Mr. Whalley. Dampier worked out his passage on board the ship *Content* of London, having made with the captain an agreement, signed and sealed, that on his arrival he should be free to go wherever he pleased. The young man stayed with Mr. Whalley less than six months. "I was clearly out of my element," he says. Once more, therefore, he betook himself to the sea, and, in a series of short coasting voyages, became thoroughly acquainted "with all the ports and bays about Jamaica," and all the local manufactures and produce. He learned, also, how to avail himself in navigation of the land and sea breezes.

In August, 1675, he shipped with Captain Hudsel, bound for the bay of Campeachy, to trade with the log-wood cutters. This turned out a most perilous and tedious voyage, in which, when it was brought to a close, Dampier truthfully declares the mariners had gained as much experience "as if they had been sent out on a design."

Undeterred by the "much experience," Dampier was no sooner paid off at Port Royal than he sailed again to

the bay of Campeachy, determined himself to become a logwood cutter. In the small coast island of Trist he landed, fully equipped for the hard labour that awaited him, and there joined the company of two hundred and sixty or two hundred and seventy English logwood cutters, always plying their labour at the peril of their lives, always exposed to the attacks of the Spaniards, and always apt at making reprisals. The Englishmen led a wild, reckless life, relieving the hard labour of cutting the wood by hunting in the neighbouring forests, by long carousals on the arrival of trading vessels, and by marauding expeditions against the Indian villages of the interior. The step from such a life to that of a buccaneer was short, and Dampier made it under the pressure of accumulated misfortune. When he was recovering from a sickness (now known as the "jiggers"), a terrible storm broke over the island, shattering ships and dashing them into the woods, and laying much of the land under water. Dampier's goods were destroyed, and his provisions spoiled. He had no store of logwood to enable him to purchase necessaries. He joined the rovers.

After adventures various, sometimes disastrous and on the whole unsuccessful, Dampier betook himself again for a period of ten or twelve months to logwood cutting. He then returned by way of Jamaica to England, and reached home in August, 1678.

During his stay in England he married. In his works he mentions his wife once only, and in these words: "Having married my wife out of his (*i.e.*, the Duke of Grafton's) Duchess's family, and leaving her at Arlington House at my going abroad."

In 1679, Dampier was again in Jamaica, prepared to re-engage in the logwood trade. But first he laid out nearly all his wealth in purchasing "from a man of whose title to it he was well assured," a small estate in Dorsetshire; then he entered upon a trading voyage to the mosquito country; and soon after, when anchored in Negril

Bay, at the western end of Jamaica, with the rest of the crew of the trading vessel, he joined a numerous force of buccaneers.

Shortly after Christmas, 1679, they attacked and captured Porto Bello. Then, some three hundred or four hundred strong, they marched across the isthmus of Darien, to capture and plunder Spanish ships and settlements in the Southern Sea. They first took to the sea in such canoes or boats as their Indian friends could supply them with, and then in captured ships pursued their ravages on the coast and in the open sea as far south as the island of Juan Fernandez. Sometimes victorious, sometimes repulsed, disappointed in their expectation of booty, they were never happy among themselves. After a disastrous attempt upon Arica, Dampier and forty-six others, disapproving of their new captain's conduct, and suspecting his courage, quitted the lawless force, and resolved to re-cross the isthmus of Darien. This was one of the boldest enterprises ever undertaken by so small a body of men, yet it was accomplished with only slight loss.

During the journey, Dampier preserved his journal and other writings from damage by water by keeping them in a large joint of bamboo stopped at both ends with sealing-wax.

For some time in varying company, with many vicissitudes of fortune, but always keenly observant of things in earth, air, and water, the adventurer followed, with others, a lawless career in the Gulf of Mexico. In July, 1682, he arrived in Virginia, where he stayed for thirteen months, "enduring troubles of which he did not choose to give the particulars to the public."

At the end of that time he joined some old comrades, all determined on a filibustering expedition, round Cape Horn, to the coasts of Chili and Peru. "So," says he, "having agreed upon some particular rules, especially of temperance and sobriety, by reason of the length of our

intended voyage, we all went on board our ship." This was the beginning of his long, adventurous, and famous first "voyage round the world." The account of this voyage is very long, and because much that was new and interesting in Dampier's time is well known now, the better plan will be, for brevity's sake and clearness, to give the broad facts and general course of the voyage, omitting for the most part particulars.

The privateers sailed from Achamack, in Virginia, on August 23rd, 1683, in the *Revenge*, under the command of a noted buccaneer, Captain John Cooke. Dampier arrived in the Downs on board the *Defence*, of London, under Captain Heath, on September 16th, 1691.

In the first stage of the voyage the adventurers crossed the Atlantic from west to east, then from east to west, rounded Cape Horn, apparently far to the south, reached the island of Juan Fernandez in March, 1684, and were joined on their way by the *Nicholas*, of London, under Captain Eaton. They visited the Gallapagos Islands. Off Cape Blanco Captain Cooke died, and was succeeded in command by his quartermaster, Davis. The *Nicholas* left them, but shortly after they were joined by the *Cygnet*, of London, under Captain Swan. The buccaneers of the Pacific at one time mustered ten vessels of various sorts, and fought and lost a naval battle against a superior Spanish force in the Bay of Panama. Gradually the rovers dispersed.

The second stage of the voyage began when Dampier changed ships, and joined Captain Swan in the *Cygnet* (August, 1685). These two crossed the Pacific, and after a voyage of great privation and sickness, reached Guam, one of the Ladrone Islands, and passed thence to Mindanao, one of the Philippines, not then under the government of Spain (January, 1686). Their stay here was prolonged; the crew became utterly demoralised, and in January, 1687, the greater part sailed away in the *Cygnet*, leaving Captain Swan ashore with the rest of the

Dampier's Reputed Birthplace, East Coker.

crew, but carrying Dampier with them on the vessel. Under a newly-elected captain, Read, the *Cygnet* made many piratical voyages in those eastern seas. They sailed down the east side of the Philippine Islands, and went so far south as to reach the coast of New Holland in January, 1688. When they returned to the Indian seas, Dampier and a few others were allowed to go ashore at Nicobar. The *Cygnet* closed its piratical career by sinking in St Augustine's Bay, Madagascar. From Nicobar to Acheen Dampier made the voyage with a few companions in an open boat. They were overtaken by a dreadful storm, of which the navigator gives a description unsurpassed in vividness and graphic solemnity.

In the third and last stage of this great circumnavigation, Dampier was an honest seaman. From Acheen he made four voyages, which he carefully describes. He became English gunner at the fort of Bencoolen, whence, because he thought himself ill treated and almost a prisoner, he deserted, and embarked on board the ship *Defence*, of London, Captain Heath, in January, 1691. After a perilous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, he reached England in September of the same year.

Dampier, on his arrival in England, had no property worth speaking of, except his notes and papers, and a certain Prince Jeoly, whom he first met in Mindanao. The prince was wonderfully tattooed. Poverty compelled Dampier to sell the unfortunate barbarian, who was thereupon exhibited for money as the "Painted Prince" in London and in Oxford. In the latter city he died.

Dampier had with great difficulty, in many hazards, preserved his journals and charts, and obtained the means to publish them. His work was highly esteemed, and gained him so much credit that, after an interval, he was entrusted with the command of the king's ship, *Roebuck*, of twelve guns, and in this ship he started on a voyage of discovery in January, 1698. He had on board a crew of fifty men and boys, and a skilled draughts-

man to make sketches of the various strange animals and plants which they might find in different parts of the world. In this voyage, Dampier touched at the Canary Isles, crossed the Atlantic to Bahia, reached the coast of New Holland, about lat. 27° 30′ S., and ranged along it for many leagues, accurately noting shoals, depths, tides, rocks, islands, plants, and animals. He left this coast in September, 1699, and arrived at Tymur in the same month. He spent the spring of 1700 in exploring the coast of New Guinea, which he proved to be an island. He refitted his ship and recruited his provision at Batavia, set sail for England in October, and made the Cape of Good Hope in December of the same year. On the 21st of February, 1701, they came in sight of Ascension Island, where the ship sprung a leak and foundered "through perfect age." With much difficulty the voyagers reached the island, whence Dampier was taken off in the *Canterbury*, East Indiaman. He reached England in 1701.

Dampier was unhappy in the continuance of this voyage and unfortunate in its conclusion. He had reason to distrust both officers and crew, who were unwilling at their work, but ever ready to thwart his purposes. He suspected them of a design to run away with the ship, and at Bahia he thought they tried to embroil him with the dreaded Inquisition. The loss of the ship gave the jealous an opportunity of depreciating him. At home he was tried by court-martial for the loss of his ship and for beating his first lieutenant with a cane. His own reflection on the whole business is just: "The world is apt to judge of everything by the success; and whoever has ill-fortune will hardly be allowed a good name."

In the year 1703, an expedition was undertaken by English merchants at the beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession. Its object was plunder rather than discovery. Three ships sailed on this expedition, and Dampier had the chief command of the *St. George*, of

twenty-six guns. The result was disappointing in the extreme, and very damaging to our navigator's reputation for judgment and conduct. He failed to control or agree with his captains, original and successive, and other subordinate officers. He failed to capture a French ship with which he twice fought. He had the worst of a fight with a more powerful Spanish ship-of-war. He failed to lay his hand on a treasure of £500,000 which he used to speak of. He was badly beaten in an attempt to capture the great *Acapulco* Spanish treasure-ship, with 16,000,000 dollars on board.

Early in 1705, Dampier was left deserted in the *St. George* with only twenty-eight men and boys, who had scarcely a sailor amongst them. With these he captured and plundered the town of Puma, and afterwards took at sea a stout, well-provisioned Spanish bark. His own ship was so rotten that after the fight with the treasure-ship his carpenter tried to stop the shot holes with tallow and charcoal, "not daring," as he said, "to drive a nail for fear of making it worse." Dampier, therefore, abandoned the *St. George*, and changed, with his crew, into the captured bark, in which they crossed the Pacific to the Dutch settlements of the East Indies, where the ship was seized, and her crew and captain turned adrift to shift for themselves. Dampier, concluding his second circumnavigation in destitution and poverty, returned to "his owners" (1707) with the sad tale of his disastrous expedition, the failure of which, his subordinates said, was due to his own strange conduct and impracticable temper.

It is only fair to say that this is the account of those who had quarrelled with Dampier. Yet it is very evident that he could observe things much better than he could manage men.

Notwithstanding his failings, he was received and acknowledged as an eminent man and an accomplished navigator. Queen Anne permitted him to kiss her hand,

and he gave Her Majesty some account of the dangers he had undergone; but he was never entrusted with command again.

In 1708 he started on his third voyage round the world, as pilot to Captain Woodes-Rogers on board the *Duke*—the *Duchess* being their consort ship—both privateers. This expedition was as successful as the last was disastrous. Dampier traced again the now familiar route, endured similar storms, made similar captures, and fought in the same kind of battles on land and sea. Good management gave success to the expedition, and success brought wealth. The expedition returned to England in 1711, with a booty of £170,000, half of which was divided amongst the officers and crews. The prize money was not distributed till 1719, by which time William Dampier was dead. He died in March, 1715, in the parish of St. Stephen, Coleman Street, London. His will is dated November 29th, 1714. From the will it would appear that Dampier died a widower and childless.

William Dampier is generally thought of as a lawless adventurer. Those who read his books will rise from the perusal with the feeling that they have learned to like a man personally brave, gentle, good-humoured, keenly observant of men and things, and modest. As a writer of English he ranks well: some of his descriptions are unsurpassed. But his claim to fame rests chiefly on this: From twenty-seven years to fifty-nine years of age he was almost continually at sea; not always, it is true, engaged in laudable enterprises, but always judiciously and industriously observant, and faithful in recording his observations. Much of what was new to him is familiar to us, but familiar through his discovery and information. He describes minutely the form, colour, and growth of strange animals and plants; on what soils they live and grow; on what they thrive or when they ripen; which are and which are not fit for food. He describes harbours, giving the mariner minute information how to enter, how to

leave; the prevailing winds, and when they blow; what rocks to avoid, what shoals to beware of; where water may be obtained, and of what quality. He tells what commodities are in request, and what obtainable in the various ports. He describes the appearance of the towns, the aspect of the country, the nature of the soil. The forms as well as the dispositions of the inhabitants are brought clearly before you by his graphic pen. He explored unknown coasts, corrected errors, made discoveries, carefully noted for navigators every danger and every convenience of the deep. He made the winds, tides, and currents of ocean, and the variations of the mariner's compass, matters of ceaseless observation; and the full stores of knowledge thus gathered he has given to the world with a perspicuity and exactitude that have won for him the praise of all who have followed in his track. Basil Hall calls him the "prince of all navigators"; Humboldt praises him; Byron, Cook, and Flinders speak of the value of his work; Howe, Exmouth, and Nelson made their midshipmen study his writings; yet he passed his last years, if not in absolute poverty, in obscurity and neglect, and now lies in an unknown grave. William Dampier might, and probably did, recognise in his lot the retribution of a just Providence for the mis-doings of his roving life; nevertheless, we are left free to moralise on the world's unequal distribution of its favours.

CHARLES POWELL.

A FAMILY OF POLITICIANS

By the Editor

NOT the least pleasant method of acquainting oneself with county and national history is to trace it in the fortunes of a private family. Often it will be found that a stock of which little is known, and whose representatives at present are simply men of honour and good estate, attracting no attention beyond their own neighbourhoods, has had its great moments in which it has passed through severe ordeals and won a transient celebrity, to relapse, as times grew quieter and tempers less adventurous, into humdrum respect and bare pedigree. Not that the race has degenerated necessarily—sometimes, of course, this has been the case—but high occasions do not present themselves in every generation, nor are they always the most worthy members of a family that challenge the notice of the world. From the time of Herostratus until now an act of folly or worse has been a surer passport to fame than a lifetime of loyal service; the path of duty is not invariably the way to glory. Thus it is more than likely that among the widespread clan of the Spekes have been men every whit as good as, and perhaps better than, those who will figure most prominently in these pages. If such are left still in obscurity, it is either that knowledge fails or that the careers of many excellent people are drab and lacking in picturesque incident.

If we omit the late Captain Speke, the intrepid explorer of the Nile, the family was never so conspicuous

as during the latter years of King Charles II. and the short and inglorious reign of his successor; and it is on that period that I shall, for the most part, concentrate my efforts. Through the kindness, however, of the Rev. William Speke, of Sheldon Court, I am able to furnish a general account of the family, which may be read by way of introduction:—

HISTORY OF THE SPEKE FAMILY

Ancient Arms.—*Parted per fess, azure, and gules, an eagle with two heads displayed. On crest, a porcupine.*

The family of Speke is of very ancient origin. According to historical records, the Speke family is traced back to the Norman Conquest, at which time they were given, for their services, a rural parish near Exeter called Brampford, to which was added their own name, and the parish has since, and now is, called Brampford Speke. Other manors, in Devonshire and elsewhere, were also given. A deed now in Torre Abbey says of Brampford Speke: "It hath a very long tyme bine thenheritance of that knightly family of the name of Speke, or Espeak, which have been, in the first tymes, not longe after ye Conquest, men of very great estate, and condicion, as it may appeare by this deede followinge as exemplified in the leiger book of the Abbey of Torr." After a time branches of the family were found settled in the adjoining County of Somerset, and Lancashire and Bedfordshire. Sir Walter L'Espek was a celebrated warrior, and distinguished himself at the Battle of the Standard. Stephen granted him lands in Yorkshire and Bedfordshire. Sir Walter built and liberally endowed three Abbeys, Kirkham and Rivaulx in Yorkshire, and Warham in Bedfordshire. His daughter married Peter, Lord Roos, from whom the Duke of Rutland derives his pedigree. His only son was killed in hunting, and in consequence Sir Walter became a monk in his own Abbey of Rivaulx, where he died, and was buried there in 1153. Thus this branch may be called extinct.

Richard L'Espek, great grandson of Sir William L'Espek, married Alice, daughter of Sir Walter Jervoise of Exon, and had by her a son William, who married Jullian, daughter of Sir John de Valletort, of Clist St. Lawrence. They had two sons, William and John. John resided at Brampford Speke and wrote his name L'Spek. His wife was Constance, daughter of John de Esse. They had three sons, two of whom died, leaving William, the third son, who assumed the name of "Speke," which has ever since been continued by his descendants. This William married Joan, daughter of John Keynes of Dowlish Wake, Somersetshire, and so obtained the Estates of Dowlish Wake, about the year 1400 (which are still held by the head of the family). Sir John

Speke, son of this William Speke and Joan his wife, married Alice, cousin and heiress of Sir Thomas Beauchamp, who died in 1430. And so the Spekes acquired White Lackington and other estates in Somersetshire. About the middle of the 15th century the Spekes moved from Brampford Speke into Somersetshire, taking up their residence, first at White Lackington, next at Dillington, and finally at Jordans, where the head of the family has ever since resided. George Speke, Esquire, of White Lackington House—descended in the 23rd degree from Richard, the first who settled in Somersetshire—was a gallant defender of the royal cause in the time of Charles 1st. When Prince Rupert was carrying on the siege of Bridgewater, and labouring under pecuniary difficulties, Mr. Speke sent him a thousand broad pieces, which the Prince declared to Charles II. he had never asked to be reimbursed. The same gentleman raised many thousand foot, and spent many thousands in the service of Charles I., and was imprisoned several years by Cromwell. Sir George Speke was the High Sheriff for Somersetshire in 1592. In 1679 Mr. John Speke was member for the county town of Ilchester; his father at the same time represented the county. King James consulted Mr. Speke about his abdication, and corresponded with him when in exile. Mr. Speke journeyed to Exeter to welcome the Prince of Orange, who was afterwards proclaimed King of England as William III. This Mr. Speke's grandson recovered from Lady North, Countess of Guilford's descendants, the Dowlish Estates, which she had taken out by marriage (she was Ann Speke). At this time the Speke family was all but extinct. William Speke was High Sheriff for the County of Somerset in 1819. He had four sons, William, George, Benjamin (dead) and Hugh (dead), also several daughters. The eldest son, William, now resides at Jordans, and was father of the late African traveller, Capt. Speke. Queen Victoria, acting under the advice of her Ministers, was graciously pleased to make a signal recognition of the services of the late lamented Capt. Speke by an honourable augmentation to the family arms. The following is an extract from the Royal license:

"*Victoria R.* Whereas we, taking into our Royal consideration the services of the late John Hanning Speke, Esquire, Captain in our Indian Military Forces, in connection with the discovery of the sources of the Nile, and who was by a deplorable accident suddenly deprived of his life before he had received any mark of our Royal favour, and being desirous of preserving in his family the remembrance of these services by the grant of certain honourable armorial distinctions to his family arms:—Know ye, that we, of our princely grace and special favour, have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant unto William Speke, of Jordans, in the parish of Ashill, in the County of Somerset, Esquire, the father of the said John Hanning Speke, our Royal licence and authority that he and his descendants may bear to his and their armorial ensigns the honourable augmentation following:—That is to say, on a chief, a representation of flowing water, superinscribed

with the word *Nile;* and for a crest of honourable augmentation, *a Crocodile;* also the supporters following, that is to say, on the dexter side a *Crocodile*, and on the sinister side a *Hippopotamus*, providing the same be first duly exemplified according to the law of arms, and recorded in our College of Arms, &c.

"Given at our Court of St. James the 26th day of July, 1867, in the 31st year of our reign."

This brief sketch will serve to give some idea of the importance of the Speke family, but through accident rather than preconcerted design it contains little or nothing respecting the adventures of the chivalrous George Speke and his sons in the age of which Judge Jeffreys was so distinguished an ornament. This defect it will be my aim to supply in as ample a style as possible. The narrative begins at the year 1678, until when Mr. Speke passed his time in tranquil retirement at his country seat, White Lackington, near Ilminster. 1678 was the date of the Popish Plot; and the perjuries of Titus Oates, accepted as gospel truth through the length and breadth of the land, threw many a quiet home into a state of frenzy, and, among the rest, White Lackington House. In the following year, Mr. George Speke and his eldest son came forward, at the earnest entreaty of freeholders, to oppose Members of Parliament who had cast their votes against the Exclusion Bill; and the former was returned as Knight of the Shire for Somerset, and the latter as Member for Ilchester, the county town.

Hitherto, George Speke had figured as a devoted Royalist, but his view of patriotic duty led him to reject the overtures made to him by the Court, which retorted, so Hugh Speke records, with fraud, oppression, and violence. It was alleged that, on his return from his election, Mr. Speke had gone so far as to state that he would have "forty thousand men to assist in the service of the Duke of Monmouth against the Duke of York whenever occasion should be." This was a monstrous calumny. True, Speke was no friend to the Duke of

York, but, whatever steps he took in opposition to the Prince were within the limits of the law.

However, one day, when he was dining in his hall with a peer, six or seven members of the Lower House, his son, and Mr. Trenchard—who afterwards married one of his daughters, and who was, like his future father-in-law, a Member of Parliament—a messenger named Blundell arrived with a warrant. Thereupon all present pledged themselves that Mr. Speke would appear before the King and Council at the earliest possible moment in view of his age and the difficulties of travel. Content with this assurance, the messenger took his leave, and Mr. Speke, not long afterwards, presented himself in the council chamber, supported by forty of his friends, amongst whom were several peers and representatives of many of the most distinguished West Country families.

In the presence of the King and Prince Rupert, the Lord Chancellor read the charge, to which Mr. Speke replied with vigour, reminding His Majesty of the loyal services he had rendered to his late royal father and himself. Prince Rupert then ordered Mr. Speke to withdraw, after which he endorsed that gentleman's statements as to his services, and having caused the indictment to be quashed, entertained Mr. Speke at dinner.

In his *Absolom and Achitophel*, Dryden thus refers to a half-royal progress of the Duke of Monmouth in the West in the year 1680:—

> This moving court that caught the people's eyes,
> And seem'd but pomp, did other ends disguise:
> Achitophel had form'd it; with intent
> To sound the depths, and fathom where it went
> The people's hearts, distinguish friends from foes,
> And try their strength before they came to blows.

Mr. Speke was at no pains, on this occasion, to conceal on which side his sympathies lay. The Duke came to him from Longleat, where he had been welcomed by his "wealthy western friend," Thomas Thynne, an ancestor

Ilminster Church.

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of the present Marquis of Bath; and lining the hedges were crowds of men, women, and children, who shouted as he passed: "God bless King Charles and the Protestant Duke!" At Ilchester and South Petherton the streets were bestrewn with flowers, and ten miles from White Lackington House Monmouth was met by a cavalcade of two thousand horsemen. Altogether, it was estimated that an assemblage of not less than twenty thousand persons flocked to the park, and, in order to facilitate their admission, several perches of the paling were removed. The Duke, with his retinue, partook of refreshment under a sweet Spanish chestnut tree, which was still standing in the middle of the last century, and then measured, at three feet from the ground, upwards of twenty-six feet in circumference. It was much decayed, however, and is now no longer *in situ*. A large part of the house, also, which is a mile from Ilminster, has been demolished, and what remains serves as a farmstead.

A particular account of the Duke's progress would be out of place here, but two circumstances deserve to be noted. It was often said that Monmouth was a Dissenter, and thus it was regarded as significant that, on the Sunday he spent at Mr. Speke's house, he attended Ilminster Church. During his stay at White Lackington, Sir John Sydenham, of Brympton d'Evercy, invited him to junket at the White Lodge in Hinton Park, about three miles off; and there Elisabeth Parcet rushed at the Duke, and touched his hand. In two days all her wounds were healed.

I have already referred to Mr. Speke's eldest son, John. His other sons, with the apparent exception of William Speke, were also entirely of his way of thinking.

In the year 1683, young Hugh Speke, of Lincoln's Inn, was one of the actors in an escapade which led to his appearance, in the character of a defendant, before the notorious Judge Jeffreys. The principal culprit was Lawrence Braddon, a Cornishman, and accordingly on

him the vials of judicial Billingsgate were more liberally poured out; but Speke's position was decidedly uncomfortable, especially as Jeffreys rudely brushed aside his explanations, and virtually prejudged the case from the outset. It is a great mistake to regard this monster as a mere brute and bully: he was also a person of consummate talent, as is shown by his summing-up in this trial. A contemporary report of the proceedings, in folio, lies before me; and from this the chief elements of the story, as regards Speke, have been extracted.

On woefully slender grounds Braddon had come to the conclusion that the unfortunate Earl of Essex, who had been committed to the Tower in connection with the Rye House Plot, had not, as a coroner's jury had found, taken his own life, but been foully done to death with the connivance, if not at the instigation, of the Government. He mentioned his suspicion to young Speke at a casual meeting, and a few days later the latter, having returned from a tavern, where he had been having a bottle or two with a friend, was retiring to bed about ten or eleven o'clock at night, when somebody knocked at the door. This proved to be Braddon, who came to request that his acquaintance would lend him his man and his saddle, as he wanted to go to Marlborough, where, he stated, there was a good deal of gossip about the matter in hand.

Speke afterwards pleaded that, being fresh from a scene of conviviality, he was not quite accountable for the line he took on this occasion, but he appears to have been sufficiently alive to the gravity of the risk to warn Braddon not to proceed farther with his design without consulting some "prudent and discreet person" and assuming an *alias*. Having thus demonstrated his superior wisdom, Speke, as the wisest heads are liable to do, fell into a serious error of judgment. In other words, forgetting the adage *Litera scripta manet*, he addressed the following communication to Sir Robert Atkyns, Knight

of the Bath, at Netherswell, near Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, dating it Lincoln's Inn, London, ten o'clock, Wednesday night, August 15th, 1683:—

Honoured Sir,

The Bearer hereof is one Mr. Braddon, a very honest gentleman, whose father has at least eight Hundred *per ann.*, in Cornwall. It seems to be his Fate to be the only Person that follows and prosecutes the Murder of the Earl of Essex, and he has made a very considerable discovery already of it, notwithstanding the hard stream he rows against as things stand and are carried on at present. But indeed I think it could never have fallen on so fit a Man, for he has been a very hard student, and is a Person of a very good Reputation, Life, and Conversation, and has a great deal of Prudence and has as much Courage as anyone living whatsoever. He went away on a sudden hence Post towards Marlebrough to make some farther discovery, and what he has discovered, he will give you a full accompt, and of all the Transactions hitherto above (*sic*) it. I lent him my man to go with him for fear he should come to any mischief, for most here fear that he will be either stabbed or knocked in the head, if he do not take great care of himself. Seeing he came into these parts, I thought it not amiss to go and advise with you how he had best proceed in it, and I did charge him not to let anybody know who he was, that it might not be known he had been with you; For I would not for the whole world that you should come to any prejudice in the least for your kindness towards us. For we labour under many difficulties as the Tide runs at present.

Pray call Mr. Braddon by the name of Johnson, when he is with you. I have given him the same Item. We hope to bring on the Earl of Essex's murder on the Stage before they can [bring?] any of those in the Tower to a Tryal. He being in great hast I have not time to write more, but to assure that Mr. Braddon is a Person of that Integrity and Courage that nobody needs fear to trust him. I was very willing that he should take your advice in this Case which was of so great a moment, seeing he came within twenty or thirty Miles of your House. He will give you a full and clear Relation of everything in that affair, and how hard they have been upon him. Sir Henry Capel told him that it was a thing too great for him &c. All which Mr. Braddon (that you are to call Johnson, whilest he is at your house) will give you a true Relation of. Mr. Braddon hath been at great Trouble and Charge already about it; I know few that would have ventured to have undertaken this Affair besides himself as times go. I received yours this day, with the great pains you took, and the letter to the Lady Russel, which finding unsealed I sealed, without looking into it, and carried it myself. She returns to you ten thousand thanks, and says she knows not what return to make you for your most extraordinary kindness. I have not time

to write any more at present by reason that Mr. Braddon alias Johnson stays only for this my Letter. I am, Sir,

Your most obliged Friend and humble Servant,

HUGH SPEKE.

I am writing a letter to send you by the Carrier.

Armed with this epistle, Braddon set forth on his travels, the precise object of which was to procure evidence showing that the report of Lord Essex's murder had been circulated before the day on which he was found with his throat cut. Such a rumour, if genuine, would dispose of the theory of suicide, and point to a deliberate conspiracy, the secret of which had somehow leaked out. Braddon's conviction of the existence of a plot made him absurdly indifferent to the quality of the evidence by which it was to be proved. Arriving at Marlborough, he formed an acquaintance with one Butcher, a grazier, from whom he learnt that a man named Burgis, a pinmaker, had brought back a report of the Earl of Essex's death from Frome, where he had heard of it at the house of Mr. Compton, the postmaster. Burgis was thereupon invited to call upon Braddon at the White Hart, and showed himself very obliging and pliable. He could not, indeed, accompany the stranger to Frome, but he willingly indited a letter in which he stated that he had been informed of the tragedy at Frome on August 6th. This date did not suit Braddon, so, at his desire, it was corrected to the 13th. Braddon, however, claimed that he was justified in this emendation, since Burgis, when told one Saturday night at Marlborough that the Earl of Essex had cut his throat the day before, exclaimed: "How can that be? It must have been done before, for yesterday I heard it at Frome before five of the clock." Subsequent investigation seriously impaired the credibility of this witness. Neither Compton the postmaster, nor Lord Weymouth, who resided near Frome and received what he believed to be one of the first letters relating to the subject in the West, had the slightest intelligence of the event before the

Sunday. The result was that Braddon was apprehended at Bradford in Wiltshire, committed to the county gaol, and thence removed by *Habeas Corpus* to London. Among the papers found on him at the time of his arrest was Hugh Speke's letter to Sir Robert Atkyns, which had never been delivered, and which now, as it were, "came home to roost."

Speke was taken in custody by a messenger, Thomas Saywell, who placed a guard of soldiers over him, and kept him in rigorous confinement for eighteen weeks. A letter from Sayell, preserved in the Public Record Office, affirms that, as Speke refused to pay for his board and lodging, he had made him free of a garret. After this long detention he was admitted to bail, but five days later was arrested in his barrister's gown at the gate of Westminster Hall. An action of *scandalum magnatum* was instituted at the suit of the Duke of York, and countermanded the night before it was to have been tried at the Hertford Assizes. Eventually he was arraigned on February 7th, 1683 (old style), before Judge Jeffreys, on a charge of "high misdemeanour, subornation, and spreading false reports," in company with Lawrence Braddon. Braddon's conduct, as revealed at the trial, far from confirming Speke's estimate of his prudence, was a tissue of indiscretions not easy to parallel, which Jeffreys keenly, relentlessly, but not on the whole unjustly, exhibited in his charge to the jury as symptoms of disloyalty. To what extent Speke was actually involved in the affair was not fully elucidated, although Jeffreys very properly drew attention to the repeated use of the pronouns "we" and "us" in the letter to Sir Robert Atkyns as fixing a reasonable share of responsibility on the writer. The judge, however, could discover no evidence of subornation on his part, and, to that extent, Speke was relieved of the burden of the indictment.

The opposition party could not believe that a man

like Essex, whatever his situation might be, would attempt to escape from it by becoming *felo de se*. Suicide nowadays is leniently regarded, but in the seventeenth century, and, indeed, long afterwards, it was held to imply "not having the fear of God before one's eyes, and being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil." It was not only a horror, but a shame; and, in that sense, Braddon and Speke deserve sympathy for seeking to rehabilitate the unhappy nobleman in the eyes of his countrymen. Doubtless it was this motive, quite as much as a wish to discredit the hated Government, that influenced the more active partner to collect "informations" as worthless as they were formal. In the sequel, Braddon was fined £2,000 and Speke £1,000, and both were ordered to find sureties for their good behaviour during their lives.

All, however, was not over. Speke was committed to the King's Bench prison, and there he remained for four years, being thus precluded from taking any share in the Monmouth expedition. One of the inmates of the gaol was the Rev. Samuel Johnson, who had incurred this fate by writing a work entitled *Julian the Apostate*, and of whose talents, by the way, Coleridge speaks in terms of high approbation. This Whig philosopher was encouraged by Speke to indite a number of political pieces, including an "Advice to the Army," conceived in the Protestant interest. These were printed at a private press belonging to Mr. Speke, so that the risk of detection was comparatively small. However, Johnson was found out, fined, and ignominiously whipped from Newgate to Tyburn.

At length Hugh Speke grew weary of imprisonment, and wrote to the Marquis of Powis, desiring to be informed by the King on what terms his release would be granted. A reply came that it was useless to expect any indulgence until the fines imposed on his father and himself, which amounted in the aggregate to £2,327 6*s*. 8*d*., had been paid, and until security for their good behaviour had been

given in the sums of £20,000 by his father and £10,000 by himself. As regards the fines there was no difficulty —Mr. Speke could well afford to pay them; but he did not wish to be unfair to his friends by inducing them to become security for him when he had no intention whatever of desisting from his opposition to the King. Finally, at the King's suggestion, a bargain was struck, whereby Speke was to pay into the Exchequer the sum of £5,000, with the understanding that the money should be refunded if the family conducted themselves in a manner satisfactory to His Majesty, and that pardons should be bestowed on George Speke, the father, Mary Speke, the mother, Hugh Speke, the son, and Mary Jennings, a sister of the latter, and a widow, who had never been the object of a prosecution, but against whom there was a good deal of animus in Court circles.

Properly to appreciate this compromise, we must return a little and ascertain what had happened during the period of Hugh Speke's incarceration.

So far as Mrs. Speke, his mother, is concerned, she had been described by Bishop Mews, in July, 1683, as "the most dangerous woman in the West," and he had advised that the house should be searched for papers. The Government, however, appear to have had no conception of the greatness of the storm that was about to burst in the West, although they did not absolutely neglect precautions. Suspicion was particularly directed to Mr. Trenchard, who by this time had married Mistress Ann Speke. He was supposed to be the moving spirit in every plot for the subversion of the existing *régime;* and in June, 1684, was committed to the Tower for high treason. He was acquitted of the charge, and, betaking himself to Somerset, was received in a way that gave much umbrage to well-wishers of the Government. Amongst these was Justice Ellesdon, of Charmouth, who wrote to the Secretary of State that Trenchard "was attended by Anabaptists, Sectaries, and other disaffected

persons, who went along with him, congratulating him on his enlargement, to the great vexation of all the loyalists. He went through Crewkerne, considerably out of his road, to White Lackington, where old Speke lives, to show his kindness to the fanatics, whom he shook by the hand, and publicly caressed in the streets."

Whilst he was staying with his father-in-law, a messenger came to arrest him at midnight, but was forced to depart without having achieved his purpose. His want of success was ascribed to a riot excited by Mr. Speke, in consequence of which Mr. Trenchard made good his escape. On May 29th, 1685, the Sheriffs of Somerset were instructed to lend their assistance to two messengers who had been despatched to arrest Mr. Trenchard, Mr. Speke, and other persons concerned in the affair; and Mr. Speke's indiscretion cost him two thousand marks. For an old gentleman, as he was, the squire of White Lackington was certainly not remarkable for prudence. Several years before, one of his sons had written of him:—

> Since his return, notwithstanding the number of entreaties and advices to be silent, and not concern himself with public affairs by words, yet the truth is he gives himself more liberty, talks more at random and dangerous than ever formerly, which is a great affliction to all his friends.

Mr. Speke appears to have had a son named William, who died in 1734, and who, if identical with Captain William Speke, a loyalist, must have been inexpressibly shocked at these irregularities. On the thirtieth of May, 1685, this officer and the Vicar of Ilminster (a Mr. Clark) paid a visit to the post-house of that town, intercepted a letter, and opened it. It contained the first intimation that Monmouth was on the point of landing. With this valuable missive in his possession, Captain Speke set off post-haste to the King, and meanwhile despatched a messenger to the Mayor of Taunton, advising him to search the bag for that place. Before the man arrived, however, all save eight letters

had been delivered. Of the remainder, one was to the same effect as that which had been seized by Captain Speke, and warned honest Protestants to be ready for immediate developments. Another purported to be written by a friend of the King, but the anxiety to which it confessed was evidently a blind. In both communications Monmouth was referred to as "a certain person." The local authorities were impressed with these revelations, and precautions were taken in view of a possible rising. James, on the other hand, attached little importance to what he termed the "enigmatical letter" brought him by Captain Speke, although not many days elapsed before his eyes were unseeled to the grave events impending.

On June 11th (old style), the Duke landed at Lyme Regis, and on the 16th he marched to Chard, from which White Lackington House is only four miles distant. Mr. George Speke was of an age which rendered active participation in the revolt impossible, and accordingly he withdrew from his mansion, leaving it to his son John to represent the family in a cause which, to most of them, was as dear as life itself. "Colonel" Speke, as he was now called, proceeded to the camp with a troop of mounted men, whose unkempt appearance led Wade to designate them as "ragged horse," and who mustered forty strong. No other person of influence and position came to the Duke's support, notwithstanding that he was now in the very neighbourhood where he had recently been received with so much enthusiasm.

At Frome, some of Monmouth's officers "went away" without his knowledge, and one—Colonel Venner—tried to persuade Monmouth himself to adopt a similar course. Apparently they had become convinced of the hopelessness of the undertaking, and deserted. If the evidence of one Richard Goodenough may be believed, Colonel John Speke was of the number of those who "went away" at Frome. There seems to be a faint possibility that the "going

away" of these officers was not dictated by the motive of personal safety, as one witness declared that Venner and Parsons were despatched by Ferguson, Major Wade, and others to Amsterdam for the purpose of buying arms and ammunition. Wade, however, is the authority for the statement before made, and, having regard to his position in the army, it is only reasonable to accord the preference to his testimony as compared with that of the obscure "J. Tillier."

As for Colonel Speke, Roberts is very unwilling to admit the charge of his having forsaken the Duke. "Can we suppose," he says, "that Taunton chose this gentleman in 1695 to be their (*sic*) representative, knowing him to be a coward and a deserter of the cause he had taken up? It is unreasonable to entertain such a thought. His leaving the army was doubtless upon business." Roberts's argument is by no means cogent, as it attributes to the potwallopers of Taunton a highmindedness which, it is to be feared, the electoral history of the town will disprove. Everything turns on the credibility of Goodenough, which is an unknown quantity; and, in taking leave of John Speke, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that his case is one of grave suspicion.

Whatever may be the truth about this, the Spekes, as a family, were not to escape without contributing a victim to the bloody toll exacted from the western shires by the inexorable Judge Jeffreys. It happened that when the Duke of Monmouth was at Ilminster, Charles Speke, a younger son of George Speke, of White Lackington, was also there, and shook hands with him. This (save the fact that he was a Speke) was his sole offence, but it sufficed. Soon after, on his way to town, he was arrested, and Judge Jeffreys sought and obtained from the King the privilege of passing sentence on him. In vain did a major of dragoons inform him that there were two Spekes, and that the person left for execution was the wrong one. In vain did the Mayor of Taunton,

Mr. Bernard Smith, plead for mercy. Jeffreys was deaf to reason and entreaty. "His family owe me a life," he said; "he shall die for his namesake."

So Charles Speke, after praying for nearly an hour and singing a psalm, was hanged on a large tree in the market place of Ilminster, amidst many tokens of sympathy and sorrow on the part of the townspeople.

We now return to Hugh Speke, who, on his release from prison in 1686, removed from London to Exeter, where he remained until the advent of the Prince of Orange was looming in the near future. He then went back to town, and, as he tells us, observed the countenances of the courtiers. They, in turn, did not neglect him. The Marquis of Powis had a private interview with him, in which he was reminded of the gracious pardon conferred on himself and his family by King James, and the hope was expressed that, in return for this favour, His Majesty might count on their loyal support in the threatening state of affairs. To this rendering of the circumstances Hugh Speke not unnaturally demurred. He pointed out that the pardon had only been obtained at a cost of more than double the fines, and that he had suffered the irreparable loss of an innocent brother.

The Marquis then said that the £5,000 had been expended on the fortification of Portsmouth harbour, but he would guarantee the repayment of that amount if Mr. Speke and his family would promise His Majesty their assistance in the existing crisis. His lordship made a note of Mr. Speke's address, and the next day the latter received a letter from Mr. Chiffinch, closet-keeper to the King, requesting him to attend at his lodgings the following evening at six o'clock. There he met the King, who, having spoken of the false information that had occasioned such sufferings to Speke and his family, appealed to him to join the Prince of Orange on his landing in the character of a spy. For this service he was to be rewarded by the return of the £5,000 paid in fines and

an additional sum of five thousand guineas, to be deposited with any goldsmith Mr. Speke might name, and delivered on the completion of the conditions.

Mr. Speke requested the delay of a day for consideration. It was not, he states, that he had the least idea of closing with the King's offers as regards the betrayal of his party, but it occurred to him that the circumstances afforded him an unrivalled opportunity of serving his religion and country. The next day he again met His Majesty, and, after declining any payment, represented to the King that if he was to perform the specified duties, he must be provided with the necessary means, which included three blank passes, one signed by His Majesty and two by the Earl of Feversham, the commander of the Royal forces. Failing this precaution, either he or his agents might be arrested and ill-treated in moving from point to point.

King James fully appreciated this line of argument, and delighted at the thought that he had captured an invaluable ally, handed him two days later the passes asked for, which ran as follows:—

Lewis, Earl of Feversham, Lieutenant-General of His Majesty's forces.

Suffer the bearer hereof to pass and repass freely at all hours, times, and seasons, without any molestation, interruption, or denial.

FEVERSHAM.

To all Officers
Military and Civil.

James intimated that he looked upon Speke's refusal of the large sums offered to him as plain proof of his sincerity; and an arrangement was made that all letters should be addressed to the King, under the cover of Mr. Richard Collins, who, when James landed in Ireland, was one of the commissioners of revenue.

Shortly after this, the report having arrived that the Prince of Orange had disembarked at Brixham, Mr. Speke was commanded to proceed without delay to Exeter. At

Sturminster Newton he was detained by a captain of horse until the pass had been forwarded to the Earl of Arran at Salisbury; and, on resuming his journey, he fell in with the Prince's advanced guard at Honiton. This consisted of a battalion under the command of his friend, Colonel Talmash, to whom he unfolded his plans, and who gave him a letter of introduction to the Prince.

After a halt of two hours, he set out for Exeter, about sixteen miles distant, and there, in the presence of Schomberg (afterwards Duke of Portland), Talmash's letter was opened and read. The Prince, having consulted his leading English supporters, decided to repose the utmost confidence in Speke, who showed him the letters he wrote to the King. The purport of them was that his officers were not to be trusted, and the desertion of Prince George of Denmark and the Duke of Ormond occurring about this time heightened the King's sense of Speke's fidelity and shrewdness. As the consequence, James quitted the army.

Prior to his departure from London, Speke claims to have drawn up, with the assistance of a friend, what is styled a "Third Declaration" in the name of the Prince of Orange, which was placed under a bookseller's shop door by night, printed, and disseminated throughout the kingdom. The author announces as his motive that "he judged proper to terrifie the Papists, and to inspire the Protestants with courage," and Bishop Burnet affirms that the publication was "penned with great spirit and had as great an effect." Indeed, it almost resulted in a massacre of the Roman Catholics.

After some dozens of copies had been despatched from London by post, Mr. Speke submitted the declaration to the Prince of Orange at Sherborne, and the latter at once protested that he knew nothing about it. However, on reading it, he and his entourage were by no means put out, recognising, as they did, that a signal service had been rendered them by a fulmination which set every

adherent of the established religion on his guard. Sir James Mackintosh describes it as "the boldest attempt ever made by a subject," but was Speke that subject? This has been denied by more than one historian, and Oldmixon goes so far as to say that "Speke could not write it any more than he could write Locke's essay on the 'Human Understanding.'" Another judge—Wallace—speaks slightingly of Speke as a person unworthy of credit; to him he is merely "the notorious Speke."

Were he able, the subject of these strictures might reply *At mihi plaudo.* In one sense, he has already done so in anticipation, since he indited an account of the events, bearing the following title: "The Secret History of the Happy Revolution in 1688. Humbly dedicated to His Most Gracious Majesty King George. By the principal transactor in it. London: printed for the author by S. Keimer, at the printing-press in Paternoster Row."

A somewhat pathetic circumstance is the childlike confidence King James ever retained in the man he had so grossly injured. Was it a question of his withdrawing to France? He sent Mr. Collins from Rochester to ascertain Mr. Speke's opinion. The person consulted immediately repaired to Whitehall, and finding that William was favourable to his father-in-law's suit, he advised accordingly. In this way a regular correspondence was maintained, with William's knowledge and consent, between the deposed sovereign and Speke right up to the Peace of Ryswick, 1697.

Hugh Speke was not rewarded for these important services by any public office, as this might have opened King James's eyes, but it might be thought that the five thousand pounds wrung from his family would have been reimbursed. In 1689, Mr. George Speke petitioned the House of Commons on the subject, drawing particular attention to the fact that the Crown solicitors had suborned indigent people to swear against his wife, and that thus

the fine had been imposed through illegal practices. The petition was dismissed on technical grounds, and a second petition fared no better.

On King William's death, Mr. Hugh Speke addressed himself to Queen Anne, and Lord Godolphin, to whom the matter was referred, was good enough to order the payment of one hundred pounds. But Speke wanted, not one hundred, but five thousand pounds; and after the accession of George I. made a fresh attempt to recover that amount—whether successfully or not is uncertain. It seems probable that the publication of the book before mentioned was designed to promote this particular end.

I now come to a feature in the family history which is not connected with the Revolution of 1688, but ought not to be omitted in this place. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Mr. George Speke had two daughters. Mary died unmarried, whilst her sister, who was a rich heiress, was wedded to Lord North, afterwards the Earl of Guilford. It was as Lord North, however, that he made his mark, and when he was Prime Minister, the great-grandfather of the present head of the family recovered from him the Dowlish estate—a circumstance which at once gratified and astonished some people, who saw in it a crowning instance of the impartiality of English law and justice. At that time the family was all but extinct, and it is interesting to know that, in that event, the person who would have succeeded to the estates would have been none other than William Pitt, who was in the entail, and who has left a much greater name than Lord North. Thanks to my kind friend, the Rev. John Dickinson, the possessor of the original, I have been enabled to copy a letter of Pitt, written in youth to his kinsman, Mr. William Speke, and undated. The letter is as follows:—

Most Worthy Sir,

I return you many thanks for your very kind letter, and feel how much I am obliged to you for the trouble you were so good [as] to take of

writing to me, which you know always gives me so much pleasure. We were all very glad to see Mr. Hoyte, who din'd with us some days ago, and we shou'd have been very happy if at the same time we cou'd have had your company as you once gave us hope we might. Then we cou'd have had an opportunity of showing you our Hayes Common, which, tho' it cannot be compared here [Something omitted.]

Give me leave to thank you for your kind remembrance of your Friends in Kent, who you may be assur'd can never forget theirs in Somersetshire. The white greyhound has done no feats this winter: by the next I believe no hare less cunning than the Somerton witch will escape him. The little chesnut mare turns out admirably, and I think I could show her to some advantage at the tail of your hounds over Wick hill and Somerton Fields. I depend upon taking a good merry ride with you this summer, which I assure you, Worthy Sir, will be a most agreeable party to

Your very faithful Friend and obedient Servant,

WILLIAM PITT.

P.S.—My Papa and Mama and Brothers and Sisters desire their affectionate compliments to you.

THE EDITOR.

THE FOLLIES OF BATH

By W. Tyte

LIFE in Bath in and after the eighteenth century, from its kaleidoscopic aspects, has furnished ample material for the satirist both with pen and pencil. Among the votaries of the former may be named Anstey, Smollett, and Dickens; and of the latter, Rowlandson, Bunbury, and Cruickshank. From the productions of these writers and artists impressions can be easily obtained of the serio-comic side of local society and its doings during the period in question. Indeed, the frontispiece to a once-popular book, *Bath Characters*, represents three figures—a jester, dancing nymph, and quack—with the inscription: "Wee thre Bath Deities bee, Humbug, Follee & Vanitee"; but a fourth, as representative of the soul of good in things evil, might have been added, namely, "Charitee," whose shrine was not absent from this temple of Frivolity. It is not surprising that these personified attributes entered into the composition of that remarkable individual, Beau Nash, so long the titular king of the city, who stamped his own impress upon it. In early life, he was "all things by turn, and nothing long"—an undergraduate, a law student, soldier, sailor, director of Court pageants, and a rake. Thus, by training and inclination, he was well qualified to play a conspicuous part in a demoralised age, and in Bath, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, he found a theatre wherein to turn his talents to account. It is eminently suggestive of his character that after he

was expelled from Jesus College, which left him no time to settle with the bursar, it was found that all he left behind him were a pair of boots, two plays, a tobacco box, and a fiddle, so that the debt survived to garnish his biography. Having no visible resources, he turned to the gaming table, which was in vogue from the Court downwards, to gain a subsistence. Pistol, one of Falstaff's reprobates, boasted that the world "is mine oyster," which he would open with his sword. Nash opened it, metaphorically, with the dice-box. With a burly frame, a libertine's tongue, and pert wit, he was a *persona grata* in the roystering and fast sets then abounding, as backwater from the flood of licentiousness which accompanied the Restoration of the Stuarts. That he was not at all squeamish, Gascon as he was in spirit, can well be imagined, otherwise he would not, when at York, with an empty purse, have accepted the offer of some of his boon companions to stand at the great door of the Minster as the people were leaving, wrapped in a blanket, by which he won a wager of fifty guineas. "What!" cried the Dean as he passed by, "Mr. Nash in masquerade?" "Only a Yorkshire penance for keeping bad company," replied Nash, pointing to his companions. Yet the vanity which his subsequent success as M.C. developed was at times feminine in its manifestation, as when he lurked at the front window of a London coffee-house, hoping to receive recognition from some fine lord or lady with whom he had come in contact at Bath.

Creature of the time as he was, he nevertheless possessed some practical characteristics. He combined firmness with tact, *bonhomie* with discipline, qualities which stood him in good stead when he became Master of the Ceremonies—a post he obtained on the death of Captain Webster, a noted gamester, who was killed in a duel fought in the Grove. His post at first was no sinecure; the little kingdom, of which he was the head, was in a state of chronic anarchy. The visit of Queen

Anne in 1703 attracted hither adventurers and blacklegs from all parts of the country, Nash himself being among the number. Many of these undesirables continued to infest the place. Added to them came the country gentry, then for the most part a boorish, boozing, foul-mouthed fraternity, despotic at home, shameless in public, and treating woman with contempt. Their wives, ill-educated, and their daughters, hoydens, often accompanied them. An easy prey were they for the sharpers who made Bath their headquarters. The evening entertainments were invaded by drunken ruffians, swaggering about with swords or riding whips, lolling on seats with mud-bespattered boots, and tearing draperies and dresses with their spurs. Even in the baths, ladies were exposed to offensive gibes or more offensive compliments. The few of the "upper ten" who came for the benefit of the waters kept themselves apart; they declined to mix with the rest of the company, or to take part in the amusements, which were mostly of the *al fresco* kind.

Nash succeeded in putting an end to all these abuses, in reducing chaos to order, and substituting decorum and refinement for the libertinism and coarseness hitherto prevailing. His laws were imperative, and though waggish in composition, were obeyed by all with a deference that showed his authority was despotic and that his legislation was salutary. Under his auspices, an Assembly Room was provided as a centre of fashionable life, and a Pump Room built where the waters could be drunk and invalids rest. Balls were held regularly, and a permanent band was engaged. The former began at six and closed at eleven, when he held up his finger to the musicians. Not a moment longer would he allow them to continue, on account of the invalids and to maintain the reputation of the Baths. Even when the Princess Amelia appealed to him for one dance more, after he had given the signal to close, he assured her Royal Highness that the established rules of Bath resembled the laws of Lycurgus, which

would admit of no alteration without an entire subversion of his authority.

He was equally rigorous in the matter of dress. Ladies were wont to offend by coming in white aprons, and the gentlemen by appearing booted and spurred. The Duchess of Queensberry (*née* Kitty Hyde) found herself divested of a cherished apron, and saw it thrown by Nash among the waiting women, with the remark that none but Abigails wore such things. Her Grace, abashed at the reprimand, begged the autocrat's pardon. In like manner, if a gentleman was seen in boots, Nash made up to him, and, demurely bowing, reminded him that he had forgotten his horse! The wearing of swords led to frequent encounters on very slight provocation, and sometimes with fatal effects. A duel which took place by torchlight in the Grove between two gamesters, one of whom was killed, shocked the public mind, and Nash adroitly seized the opportunity to prohibit the wearing of these dangerous appendages. Finding the reform met with hearty approval, he went a step further: if he heard of a challenge given and accepted, he instantly had both foes arrested.

But there was one folly or vice which he regarded with an indulgent and interested eye, viz., gambling. If it was a fashion of the age, it was, as already stated, a necessity with him. For a long time people wondered whence the great Master of Ceremonies obtained supplies to maintain his luxurious mode of living. His dress was expensive, his equipage sumptuous. He usually travelled in a post-chaise drawn by six greys, with outriders, footmen, and French horns. He always wore a white hat, his choice of which was, he said, to secure it from being stolen. All his grandeur rested on his success at play, both directly and indirectly, for he not only gamed personally, but he was in league with the croupiers, and shared their often dishonest gains. What these were may be inferred from the fact that when he quarrelled with

and sued his partners, he declared that he had been cheated out of £20,000.

The exposure of this nefarious coalition would, it might be thought, have lowered Nash in the public estimation. It did nothing of the kind. Neither did it prevent the Corporation from placing a full-length marble statue of "Bath's benefactor," as he was styled, in the Pump Room, holding in his hand a plan of the Mineral Water Hospital, the building fund of which he was instrumental in largely augmenting. The effigy stands there to this day. In the general passion for cards, "E. O.," "Hazard," and kindred games, he found condonation. In fact, ladies as well as gentlemen flocked to Bath, and staked heavily at the gambling dens, just as they do now at Monte Carlo. Even some of the clergy were to be seen there, and one noted for his frequent appearance was styled "The Bishop" by the set in which he mixed. Season after season, so deep was the play, that fortunes were lost, estates hampered, and families impoverished, while one and another of the victims found refuge in a suicide's grave. The example was set in high places for this ruinous pastime: it is recorded that the Duke of Cumberland won £4,000 and the Princess Amelia £1,000 at "Hazard," when playing with the Earl of Northumberland, Sir John Bland, and John Offley, Esq., the King being present and joining in the game.

The etiquette prescribed by Nash, with the countenance of the medical profession, was minute and comprehensive. Visitors, on their arrival, found their plans already arranged. The abbey bells greeted them, the city waits carolled for their delectation. For the former honour they had to pay half-a-guinea, and for the latter the minimum sum of half-a-crown. Subscriptions were next paid at one of the places of public resort for the balls and music, for the private walks, and at the coffee-house for writing materials. Each day was begun with bathing, the hours being from six to nine. The

sexes bathed together, and were provided at one time with floating dishes, in which a handkerchief, a nosegay, and a snuff-box were placed. Anstey, in the *New Bath Guide*, vivaciously describes the custom:—

> You cannot conceive what a number of ladies
> Were washed in the water the same as our maid is;
> Oh! 'twas pretty to see them put on their flannels,
> And then take to the water like so many spaniels.
> 'Twas a glorious sight to behold the fair sex
> All wading with gentlemen up to their necks.

To bathing followed a mustering at the Pump Room, to chat, drink the waters, and listen to the band. The coffee-houses were next resorted to, one or two being specially provided for the fair. Concerts, breakfasts, trips to the neighbouring hills, promenading on the parades or in the meadows round the town, occupied attention until dinner time (3 p.m.), after which there was another gathering at the Pump Room, and then the balls and theatre were patronised. The regulations for the balls were precise. They began with a minuet, led off by two persons of the highest distinction present. When concluded, the lady retired to her seat, and the Master of Ceremonies brought a new partner to the gentleman. The like ceremony was observed by every succeeding couple until all who desired had participated, when the country dances began, ladies of quality, according to their rank, standing up first.

Rules were likewise laid down for the dress to be worn, and these were strictly enforced. Ladies who intend to dance minuets are again and again reminded that they must appear in hoops and lappets. "No lady" (runs the decree) "can be permitted to dance a minuet without a lappet-head and full-dress hoops, and such minuet dancers as choose to dance country dances will be attended in a retiring room by a woman servant to take their hoops off, as no hoops, be their size ever so small, are allowed in country dances." Gentlemen are

Nevers forbidden to "wear fancy dresses with slash sleeve or jacket, or turn-down cape, etc," the only dress proper for ladies being "a full trimmed suit of cloathes, or French frock, hair or wig dressed with a bag." Any other costume was "insufficient to attend the ladies, who are obliged by the rules of the assembly to appear in full dress." After the death of Nash, it was found more and more difficult to secure the observance of these orders. They were regarded as tyrannical. Smollett complained of the "fatigue and slavery of maintaining a ceremonial more stiff, formal, and oppressive than the etiquette of a German electress." Ladies were constantly trying to evade compliance. Some of them appeared in "night gowns" (evening dress). The Master of Ceremonies declared them an innovation not to be tolerated. The wearers then styled them "French night-gowns." The Master of Ceremonies was obdurate. Next they were called "Italian," and this permanently won the day; the objectionable garment, only changed in name, was then received into favour. Lady Brownlow North (née Miss Bannister, a noted beauty, wife of the Bishop of Winchester) caused a great commotion in the rooms by not appearing in the regulation costume. She flouted the remonstrance of the Master of Ceremonies with whom, however, the rest of the company sided. A scene ensued and her ladyship prudently retired. In another instance the ladies were successful. When the fashion of wearing high plumes of feathers on their heads was all the rage the Master of Ceremonies was staggered on seeing these preposterous ornaments towering and nodding defiantly in his domain. Doubtless he echoed the spirit of the lines—

> Capricious, airy, feather'd race
> (For ver, alas! is fled),
> Say what has mortalis'd each grace
> And ornament each head?

But his dislike and opposition were vain. The ladies

clung to the finery (introduced from France), and still flaunted the feathers in the face of their ruler.

The list of amusements already sketched by no means exhausts the programme. Three or four pleasure gardens on the outskirts of the city offered alluring entertainments, besides the charm of pretty grounds, walks, and bowers. At Spring Gardens, on the Bathwick side of the river, a public breakfast took place every Monday and Thursday, to the sound of French horns and clarionets, vocal music by celebrated artistes being sometimes added. Dancing on the greensward was also among the attractions. The tickets were one shilling and sixpence each; a private breakfast without music was charged a shilling. The matutinal meal was ready "early after nine," showing that the company were wont "to brush with hasty steps the dew away" to enjoy the dainties provided, among these being "Spring Gardens cakes and rolls." Anstey supplies a burlesque description of a breakfast given there by Lord Ragamuffin, at which "more bread was wasted than the poor of the parish for a week had tasted." Then there was dancing:—

> Miss Clunch and Sir Toby performed a cotillion,
> Just the same as our Susan and Bob, the postillion.

In returning, a dreadful disaster happened to the peer:—

> In handing old Lady Comfidget and daughter,
> The obsequious Lord tumbled into the water;
> But a nymph of the flood brought him safe to the boat,
> And I left all the ladies a-cleaning his coat.

Another recreation of a different class, which was popular for several years, were the *bouts rimés* competitions originated by Sir John and Lady Miller at their residence, Batheaston Villa. The contributions were deposited in a classic urn raised on a pedestal in the drawing room, wreaths of myrtle or sprigs of bay being awarded to the

compositions deemed the best. The recipients, if gentlemen, were expected to hand their "blushing honours" to the ladies, who wore them at the rooms on the ensuing ball night. Horace Walpole viewed the entertainment from the standpoint of ridicule. He says:—

> A Roman vase, decked with pink ribbons and myrtles, receives the poetry, which is drawn out every festival. Six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest compositions, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope Miller, kiss her fair hand, and are crowned with myrtle. You may think this a fiction or exaggeration. Be dumb, ye unbelievers! The collection is printed and published. Yes, on my faith, there are *bouts rimés* on a buttered muffin made by Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland; receipts to make them by Corydon the Venerable, *alias* George Pitt; others, very pretty, by Lord Palmerston; some by Lord Carlisle; many by Mrs. Miller herself, that have no fault, but wanting metre—an immortality promised to her without end or measure.

Among the other contributors were Dr. Whateley, the Rev. R. Graves, Christopher Anstey, John J. Pratt, Garrick, Sheridan, Skrine, Melmoth, Drax, Hon. Mrs. Greville, Miss Bowdler, Miss Seward, etc.

The charge for ordinary amusements was moderate, but the "perquisites" made a heavy drain on the purses of the visitors. It was the custom for every family to make the pumper, the sergeants at the Baths, the attendants at the Assembly Rooms, and the servants at the house where they lodged, as well as those at the inns where their horses were stabled, a gratuity proportioned to the services rendered. Another class had also to be remembered: these were the "pious loafers," who undertook to pray for the safe journey of departing guests, their sanctimonious professions being followed by a speedy adjournment to the gin-shop or ale-house to liquidate the alms received. As some of the roads were very precipitous and others full of ruts and holes, the more timid travellers may have been thankful for, and comforted by, these proferred supplications for Divine protection during the dangers of the journey, the sequel to their generosity being happily veiled from view.

"The old order changeth," and so "Time's effacing fingers" gradually modified the manners and customs, the follies and whims, which were in vogue in the Queen of the West in the eighteenth century; others more compatible with the progress of education and refinement taking their place, only to yield, as these will, in course of years, to the ever-exacting caprices of taste and fashion.

W. TYTE.

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SAMUEL DANIEL AND THE "LAKE POETS"[1]

By the Rev. D. P. Alford, M.A.

ALTHOUGH Somerset is not especially rich in poets, her poetical record is of great interest. As Devon can boast of a true poet contemporary with Shakespeare in William Browne, of Tavistock, even so can Somerset boast of Samuel Daniel, the reputed Poet Laureate between his greater colleagues, Edmund Spenser and Ben Jonson, Groom of the Chamber to the Consort of James I.—Queen Anne of Denmark—and Master of the Children of the Court Revels. Quiet Clevedon, at the close of the eighteenth century, was the scene of Coleridge's short and happy honeymoon; and in 1833 it was the scene of Alfred Tennyson's mourning for the friend, so deeply revered and loved, whose loss inspired "In Memoriam." But the one truly memorable event for poetry in Somerset was the sojourn of Coleridge and Wordsworth beside our Quantock hills in 1797 and 1798. This was memorable, because their influence upon each other, at the most critical moment of their lives, not only stimulated them at once for some of their finest poetical work, but also laid deep for them,

1 Chief authorities: *Thomas Poole and his Friends; Southey's Life and Correspondence;* Charles Lamb's *Letters* and *Sketches;* works of Coleridge and Wordsworth, in Macmillan's one-volume editions, with their admirable introductions and notes; Legouis, Paxton Hood, and Myers' books on Wordsworth and Brandl and Hall Caine's on Coleridge; besides separate essays by Hazlitt, De Quincey, Brimley, Shairp, Aubrey de Vere, and others.

in mental and moral conviction, the foundations of that spiritual philosophy which made them the greatest seers and teachers of the nineteenth century.[1]

Thomas Fuller tells us that Samuel Daniel was born near Taunton in 1562, and that the "harmonious mind" of the father, who was a music master, "made an impression on his son's genius, who proved an exquisite poet." Another son, called John after his father, was a musician of repute. In 1606, he published *Songs for the Lute, Viol and Voice*, and in 1618 he succeeded his brother, the poet, as Master of the Children of the Revels.

Like William Browne of Tavistock, Daniel was closely connected with Wilton and the Countess of Pembroke. After three years at Oxford, and a visit to Italy, of which we have no details, he was settled at Wilton about 1590 as tutor to the Countess's son, William Herbert. Already he had written sonnets, infusing Italian delicacy and smoothness into the freer form adopted by Shakespeare. Intercourse with Sidney's sister quickened his poetical faculty, and awoke a hearty and life-long devotion to literature. Sonnets flowed apace; twenty-seven of them were printed, without his knowledge, at the end of Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* in 1591. These had not received the final correction, which the poet, who was also the most fastidious of critics, never tired of bestowing upon his works. Therefore, in 1592, he published, on his own account, *Delia*, being fifty sonnets, which he had intended, he says, to be "consecrated to silence," but now offered to the public eye, after diligent correction. Delia was the poetical name for an early love left behind him in the West Country. A second edition being called for

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1 Treating of poets in Somerset, we must notice in passing that Crabbe, Bowles, and Thomas Moore met at the opening of the Bath Institution, January 19th, 1826, an event commemorated by the unveiling of a brass tablet there, September 2nd, 1905. Amongst local poems of interest may be mentioned, "The Ballad of Glastonbury," 1833, and "The Abbot of Muchelnaye," 1841, by the late Dean Alford; and "Songs of Somerset," 1898, by the late Prebendary Stevenson, of Lympsham.

SAMUEL DANIEL.

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within the year, he added four new sonnets and also his "Complaynt of Rosamond," a touching historical episode in a hundred and six stanzas of seven lines, the rhythm royal of Chaucer. In a new edition, 1594, Daniel suppressed a few sonnets, which he replaced with others, whilst he added twenty-three stanzas to his "Rosamond." At the same time, he published "Cleopatra," a tragedy, written at the request of the Countess of Pembroke, as a companion to her tragedy of "Antonie" (1592), and dedicated to her. By 1595, our poet's fame was secured: the hypercritical Nash commended his "Rosamond"; Spenser, in his "Colin Clout's come home again," says of him and his "Delia":—

> And there is a new shepheard late up sprong
> The which doth all before him far surpasse;
> Appearing well in that well-tuned song,
> Which late he sung unto a scornfull lasse.

Complaining of his "trembling muse," Spenser goes on:—

> Then rouse thy feathers quickly, Daniell,
> And to what course thou please thyselfe advance;
> But most, meseemes, thy accents will excell
> In tragick plaints and passionate mischance.

Very likely Daniel was of the same opinion; but he had a conviction, fostered perhaps by the success of the "Mirror for Magistrates," that the national epic was the most popular form that "tragic plaints" could assume. His own tragedy, "Cleopatra," followed later by a second, "Philotas," on the same plan, was an English copy of the so-called plays of Seneca. These frigid classical dramas had been imitated with success in France by Jodelle and Garnier; but here in England they had no chance against the romantic drama of the school of Shakespeare. Therefore, in 1595, turning from the theatre, Daniel followed up his "Rosamond" with four books of "The Civill Warres of Lancaster and Yorke," written in the eight-line stanza of Ariosto. Treating this

as his great work, he went on adding and correcting until, in 1609, he finished the eighth book with the marriage of Edward IV. Probably the poet intended to match Lucan's "Pharsalia," with which, indeed, contemporaries compared his poem. It is quite worth reading for its accurate history, and for the feeling it leaves behind of our own English annals being the story of living men and women, just as much under God's care as was Israel of old.

But for his fame as a poet, Daniel did not choose wisely. His reputation as the "well-languaged" was, indeed, fully maintained here; as it was, also, in his prose works, the reasonable "Defence of Rhyme," against the fads of Campion and Webbe, and in the "History of England," which was highly valued as being at once the most accurate, copious and sententious then written. There are also in his "Civill Warres" a few passages of real poetry, such as the pathetic description of the entrance of Richard II. into London in Book II., his meditation on his fallen greatness in Book III., and the death of Talbot and his son at Chatillon in Book VI. There are, besides, a few striking similes and some telling epithets, as when Henry VI. is described as the "weak-good, feeble-godly king." But, on the whole, the narrative is too flat for poetry, and lays Daniel open to the charge made against him by Michael Drayton that he was "too much the historian in verse," and that "his manner better fitted prose." This certainly is not true of his sonnets, nor of his lyrics and dramas. In these he equals any of his contemporaries in exquisite felicity of expression; and they were quite ready to acknowledge it. For instance, the author of "The Return from Parnassus" describes him as "the honey-dropping Daniel"; Drummond of Hawthornden held that "for sweetness of rhyming he was second to none"; and even Drayton, recognising his infinite care in versifying, thus addressed our poet:—

> And thou, the sweet Musæus of these times.
> Pardon my rugged and unfiled rymes,
> Whose scarce invention is too meane and base,
> When Delia's glorious muse doth come in place.

In 1599, Daniel was tutor at Skipton, in Yorkshire, to the Lady Anne Clifford, a girl of eleven. He found teaching irksome; but the young lady, as well as her mother, the Countess of Cumberland, was always the poet's steadfast friend; and much later, when she was Countess of Pembroke and Montgomery, she put up a monument to his memory in Beckington Church. In that same year, 1599, Daniel wrote his "Musophilus," just such a defence of culture and poetry against a man of the world as might have been written by Coleridge, Wordsworth or Southey two hundred years later.

On the coming of James I. to the throne, our poet greeted him with a panegyric, remarkable—as are his epistles to persons of quality which were printed with it—for a fine mixture of due respect with honourable independence and "delicate admonition." As an example of "delicate admonition," we have that suggestion of the real strength of a throne which the unhappy Stuarts never took to heart:—

> The pedestal, whereon thy greatness stands,
> Is built of all our hearts and all our hands.

Other traits of this our earliest Somerset poet are a tone of purity very exceptional at the corrupt Court of James I., and a deep vein of reflection scarcely equalled amongst our poets, except by Wordsworth. For unsullied beauty, his "pastoral tragi-comedy," "Hymen's Triumph," acted before the Court in 1615, stands almost unrivalled; and for calm thoughtfulness it would be difficult to surpass the stanzas addressed to the Countess of Cumberland, which contain those pregnant lines:—

> And that unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man.

Perhaps our poet, like William Browne, felt his genius superseded by the growing rage for the drama; perhaps the more vulgar dissipation of the Court of James compared with that of Elizabeth vexed his pure spirit; at all events, soon after the accession of James I. he left London, and retiring, like Shakespeare, to his native fields, rented the farm of Ridge, in the parish of Beckington. He did not resign his offices, but still for some years superintended the children's plays at the Court, as well as in Bath and Bristol; but for the last fifteen years of his life his wearied heart sought and found rest in his early home. His dissatisfaction with himself is no mere fancy: in the dedication to his second tragedy, "Philotas," 1605, he laments that he has—

> Outlived the date
> Of former grace, acceptance and delight.

And wishing, under the pressure of melancholy, that many of his verses had never been written, he adds:—

> But years have done this wrong,
> To make me write too much and live too long.

His frequent corrections, which are almost always improvements, show that Daniel was a most conscientious writer; these sad lines suggest that he was too sensitive for his own comfort. Let us hope that he found in quiet meditations in his native pastures that peace of mind which he could not find at Court, and that his later years were passed in calm cheerfulness amongst his own people, minding his farm, and still to the last carrying on the congenial work of correcting and reprinting his poems. He died at Beckington in 1619; and four years later his brother John brought out a new edition of "The whole workes of Samuel Daniel Esquire in Poetrie," and dedicated them to Prince Charles.

I may, perhaps, be allowed to close this short notice

with a sonnet, now slightly altered, which was written[1] thirty years ago:—

TO SAMUEL DANIEL

Musophilus! Those liquid sounds, that speak
Of music greatly loved and bravely wrought,
Here in thy native meadows bid us seek
To share thy loyal heart and generous thought.
When thou life's battle steadfastly had'st fought,
Training Eliza's court in sweet, calm ways,
And still had'st scarce attained renown long-sought,
Giving to verse and story all thy days;
Then, wisdom bade thee disregard man's praise,
And seek the firm content which virtue yields,
Forgetful of court plots and civil frays,
In blest retreat, amid these western fields;
And nature, study, faith, their succour brought
To help thee practise what thy verse had taught.

The Nether Stowey Brotherhood almost claimed this our early Somerset poet as one of themselves; for with all sorts of differences of genius and taste and temperament, Coleridge and Wordsworth and Southey and Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt all agreed in their loving appreciation of Samuel Daniel, and in trying to restore his lost renown. This brotherhood was Somerset's greatest literary distinction; for in it were associated those who, as philosophers, poets, essayists, were to have the greatest influence in leading English thought out of the bondage of eighteenth century materialism, and of delivering English literature from the fetters of eighteenth century formalism to rejoice once more in her old heritage of romantic incident and untrammelled expression. And it was by their meeting under the shadow of the Quantocks that these great writers and teachers, and especially Coleridge and Wordsworth,[2] were really started on their life's work,

1 I wrote it at Taunton in August, 1875, and it was printed in the *Somerset Gazette* a few weeks later.

2 How far they succeeded, let the leader of the opposite school of thought bear witness. Writing in 1844, John Stuart Mill said of Coleridge, he "has been the great awakener in this country of the spirit

and, through the friendly interchange of thought and feeling, best equipped for its fulfilment.

The centre of this goodly brotherhood was Thomas Poole, the clear-headed, self-educated, democratic, and very hospitable tanner—*tradesman*, as he insisted on being called—the local patriot and true philanthropist, whose practical ability, having first secured the well-being of his neighbours, presently forced him to the front, and set him beside such social leaders as Rickman and Ricardo on the commission of enquiry for reforming the poor laws.

In August, 1794, within a month of the death of Robespierre, Thomas Poole was entertaining, in his comfortable house at Nether Stowey, two rather wild and very brilliant undergraduates. One was Mr. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, of Jesus College, Cambridge; the other, Mr. Robert Southey, of Balliol College, Oxford. They had walked from Bristol with young Mr. Burnett, of Huntspill, who was also at Balliol, and Mr. Burnett had introduced them to his friend and neighbour, Thomas Poole.

It was only in June that Coleridge had first met Southey, when he was staying at Oxford with an old schoolfellow from Christ's Hospital; but they had so much in common on literary, political and social questions, that they became close friends at once. Already, Southey and Burnett, disappointed at the bloody development of the Revolution in France, and galled by the coercive

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of philosophy, within the bounds of traditional opinions. . . . No one has contributed more to shape the opinions of those among our younger men, who can be said to have any opinions at all." It was Wordsworth's object to enable the human mind, from the recognition of the communion between nature and itself, to shape a paradise from the "simple produce of the common clay"; thus he hoped "to console the afflicted, to add sunlight to daylight by making the happy happier." J. S. Mill tells us, in his *Autobiography*, that in sad depression of spirits he did find a cure in Wordsworth. "I needed," he says, "to be made to feel that there was real permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation. Wordsworth taught me this, not only without turning away from, but with greatly increased interest in, the common feelings and common destiny of human beings."

measures which, in the passing panic, threatened to crush the hard-won liberties of England, were devising a settlement on socialistic lines in the recently-enfranchised United States. Their plan was eagerly taken up and completed by the stronger imagination of Coleridge; the settlement was to be on the banks of the Susquehanna; in that lovely and fruitful region, three hours' work a day would amply provide the immigrants and their families with all the necessaries of life, and the rest of their time would be spent in the pleasures of domestic affection and in mutual improvement; for it was an important part of the scheme that each settler should take out with him a charming and like-minded wife. As all the members of the community were to have equal authority, it was to be called "Pantisocracy."

When the young men were staying at Nether Stowey in August, 1794, they were so full of this delightful scheme that they even aroused the interest and secured the sympathy of their practical, clear-headed host, Thomas Poole. This is the impression he has left us of the two leaders, Coleridge being then not quite twenty-one and Southey just twenty:—

> Coleridge, whom I consider the principal in the undertaking, . . . possesses splendid abilities; is a shining scholar; . . . speaks with much elegance and energy, and with uncommon facility. . . . Southey is a younger man, without the splendid abilities of Coleridge, though possessing much information, especially metaphysical, and is more violent in his principles than even Coleridge himself.

The young strangers were taken to call at Marshmill, in Over Stowey, and there they scandalised Poole's cousins, John Poole, afterwards a Fellow of Oriel and Vicar of Enmore, and his Tory sisters. Southey especially horrified his hearers, and produced a bad impression in the neighbourhood, by bemoaning Robespierre as "a ministering angel of mercy, sent to slay thousands that he might save millions." As we know this was contrary to the views even then held both by Southey and

Coleridge, we must conclude, with Mrs. Sandford,[1] that this was merely a piece of undergraduate bluff and mischievous humour. On their return to Bristol, the brother poets composed together their striking three-act drama, "The Death of Robespierre." This by no means makes him a hero; and its moderation was guaranteed by its being dedicated to Mistress Hannah More, who, with Estlin, Beddoes and Robert Hall, was then at the head of the literary circle in Bristol.

Both our young enthusiasts left college without taking a degree, and in the early months of 1775 were lodging, with Burnett, in College Street, Bristol, trying to raise the £150 needed for their emigration scheme by writing sonnets for the *Morning Chronicle*, and giving public lectures on history and politics. The lectures not only brought Tom Poole from Stowey, but also Wordsworth from Racedown, near Crewkerne. Here, in a lonely farm on a bleak hillside, the poet, quite upset by the overthrow of all his hopes in the Reign of Terror, after long and disconsolate wanderings, had lately set up housekeeping with his devoted, like-minded sister. Dorothy was Wordsworth's second self—a quicker, cheerier self, and more closely observant; and slowly, through their daily intercourse, she brought him back to his own true self, which was naturally cheerful and healthily optimistic. She recovered for him the poet's insight, which he had lost for a time; she re-awoke in him the enthusiastic love of nature, which had lately deserted him; and thus she restored to him that faith and joy and hope which, through his poems, he still supplies to others.

Though this was the first personal meeting of Coleridge and Wordsworth, it was not their first intellectual acquaintance. When Wordsworth's "Descriptive Sketches" of his tour in Switzerland were published in 1793, Coleridge read them at Cambridge, with the poet's

[1] *Thomas Poole and his Friends*, vol. i. p. 105.

brother, Christopher, afterwards the Master of Trinity; and in spite of some turgidity, as of thoughts struggling with inadequate language, Coleridge at once recognised "the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon."

As to Coleridge's own poetical efforts, in October, 1794, his last term at Cambridge, he had expressed his world-wide charity and his hatred of oppression in those sympathetic lines to a young ass which drew upon him the scoffing satire of Byron. Now, at Bristol, he was helping Southey to complete his "Joan of Arc," an immature but spirited epic, which is perhaps the most readable of all the Laureate's longer poems. Moreover, being encouraged by the promise of good pay from the good-tempered bookseller and poetaster, Joseph Cottle —to whom he had been introduced by Robert Lovell, one of the Pantisocratic brotherhood, and himself a poetaster—Coleridge was working away at his rather vague "Religious Musings," and also adding various "effusions" to his early poems, amongst these additions being the lines written in "Brockley Comb," in May, 1795.

But as summer approached, our poets were quite ready to part company. Coleridge was indignant because Southey had grown lukewarm about the Susquehanna, proposing instead a commonplace settlement in Wales. Southey, on his side, was getting tired of Coleridge's interminable, though brilliant, talk of philosophy and literature in general, and David Hartley, Bishop Berkeley, the sonnets of Bowles and Pantisocracy in particular.

In September, Coleridge was again at Nether Stowey, drawing strength and refreshment from the cordial sympathy of Thomas Poole. As before, he was taken to see the Tory cousins at Marshmill, and Charlotte Poole wrote of him, in her diary, as "a young man of brilliant understanding, great eloquence, desperate fortune, and democratic principles."

There is something of pathetic interest in the lifelong friendship of the practical Poole and the visionary Coleridge. And yet the friendship is not surprising, for each supplied what the other lacked; Coleridge finding in Poole's sterling qualities a firm anchorage[1] and a much-needed stimulus to steady exertion; Poole acknowledging himself indebted to Coleridge for the cheerier views of life which enabled him to conquer his tendency to mental depression, and gave him the energy to be the active and useful man, the wise and helpful philanthropist that he was. For Poole and all his friends—the Wedgwoods, and Humphrey Davy, and Beddoes, and Foster, and Rickman, as well as our poets—were all bound together in the one conviction which, unhappily for the future of our country, seems to be fast dying out amongst us—that they were sent into the world not first for pleasure, but for duty, and that they were bound to do what they could to make the world better and happier for their sojourn in it.

During this visit, in September, 1795, Coleridge's exhilarating presence stirred Poole to his one poetical effort, and in roughly-written but expressive stanzas, never intended for the public eye, he gives us a vivid picture of the young bard:—

> Hail to thee, Coldridge,[2] youth of various powers!
> I love to hear thy soul pour forth the line,
> To hear it sing of love and liberty
> As if fresh breathing from the hand divine.
> . . . . . .
> I love to view the abstracted gaze which speaks
> Thy soul to heavenwards towering—then I say,
> He's gone—for us to cull celestial sweets
> Amid the flowerets of the milky way.

In an additional stanza, he congratulates Coleridge on finding consolation for the loss of Southey's friendship

[1] "In you," he writes, in the early days of their friendship, "I have found an anchor."

[2] So he spells the name.

in the devoted affection of his Sara. For, in spite of his "desperate fortune," this brilliant young man was about to marry. This part of their wild scheme the Pantisocrats were only too eager to accomplish. Mrs. Fricker was a widow living on Redcliffe Hill in Bristol; she had five daughters, and they made a scanty living by taking lodgers and by dressmaking. These fair and penniless young ladies were supposed to be just the partners needed for the perfect happiness of our modern Utopians. Already, Lovell had set a good example by marrying one of the sisters, Mary; poor Burnett had been refused by another called Martha; Southey was engaged to Edith; and Coleridge, having finally broken from the attachment to his first love, Mary Evans, was about to marry Sara, the eldest of the five sisters.

The marriage took place in St. Mary Redcliffe, on October 14th, 1795; and on November 14th, Southey and his Edith were married in the same church. Constrained by want of means, Southey left his bride at the church door, and finding his way to Falmouth, and sailing for Portugal, sought to comfort his loneliness by studying Portuguese amongst the laurels and lemon trees of his uncle Hills' beautiful garden at Cintra. Encouraged by Cottle's promise of good pay for any amount of poetry, Coleridge stayed at home; and he and his Sara spent a prolonged and delightful honeymoon in the cottage at Clevedon, with its roomy porch and the roses climbing up to the bedroom windows. The poet's deeper nature was aroused by his great joy, and found expression in the lines to an "Æolian Harp" and other lyrics of sincere feeling and great beauty.

But in spite of £30 for his early poems, which Cottle paid six months before they were printed, the pressure of poverty soon threatened these heedless young people. They went to Bristol, and lodged with Mrs. Fricker, to whom, at his marriage, Coleridge, more generous than wise, had promised £20 a year. Early in 1796, when he

was almost driven to distraction struggling to earn bread by his wits in the unquiet home on Redcliffe Hill, an invitation brought him and his wife to Nether Stowey; and he soon forgot his troubles in the congenial society of Thomas Poole.

Meanwhile, our poet had been preparing for a fresh start with *The Watchman*. Travelling through the Midlands, going as far north as Sheffield, and always astonishing people with his wonderful talk, he returned to Bristol with a list of a thousand subscribers. The first number appeared duly on March 1st, but it was too dull or too serious; subscribers rapidly fell off as the magazine offended their various prejudices, and on May 13th *The Watchman* came to an untimely end with its tenth number.

Again the Coleridges were in sore perplexity, but again Tom Poole, like a true friend, came to the rescue. At first he had them with him on another visit from May 18th to 29th; and then he induced some of the poet's admirers to join him in contributing five pounds a year to provide a fund which would set Coleridge free to pursue his life's work with a quiet mind. The first instalment of forty pounds was presented at once, with an address—more gratifying than the money gift—which spoke of the donors' "gratitude for instruction and delight" from his writings and conversation, and of admiration for the "disinterested traits of his character, that he has abandoned all, even the most seducing allurements, for a situation which leaves him only the triumphs of an honest heart."

It was a similar disinterested devotion to the cultivation of the heart and to his mission as a poet that won for Wordsworth the admiration of Carlyle. In September, Poole thus expressed his entire devotion to his poet-friend:—

> By you, Coleridge, I will always stand, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and misfortune; nay, in the worst of all misfortunes, in vice . . . if vice should ever taint thee . . . but it cannot.

Holford Village (near Alfoxden).

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But Coleridge was too independent to live contentedly on his friends. He still wrote for the *Morning Chronicle*, and he might have had the lucrative post of sub-editor could he have made up his mind to live in London. Nor, in the midst of newspaper articles and family distractions, had he quite forsaken poetry. In April, 1796, he had seen through the press his early "Monody on Chatterton," the "Religious Musings," and other poems; and in June he edited a collection of sonnets by himself, Charles Lamb, Charles Lloyd, William Bowles, Charlotte Smith, and William Sotheby. In his preface he shows himself the true critic, for he makes light of outward form compared with inward meaning, contending that in a sonnet oneness of thought is everything, arrangement of rhymes a matter of indifference.

In the autumn of 1796, as another means of securing a livelihood, teaching was suggested, probably by Mrs. Barbauld, who was staying at Bristol with the Estlins, and showed much interest in the poet's welfare. Like Samuel Johnson before him, Coleridge would have found the school routine terribly irksome; so that the failure to secure a promised boy pupil was a blessing in disguise. Moreover, the Coleridges enjoyed some weeks' change in Derbyshire, arranging about the lad who never came to them; and on their way home, staying at Birmingham, they improved their acquaintance with the Lloyds, and secured a more fitting pupil in Charles Lloyd. He was a young man of literary taste and ability, but of delicate health and highly-strung nerves, with too much of the poet's sensitiveness for health or happiness. Coleridge had won his regard by rescuing him from scepticism during his *Watchman* tour.

In September, Coleridge was again in Birmingham, and it was during this visit that he heard of the birth of his eldest son. Writing to Poole of his mingled feelings of pleasure and awe at this happy event, he says: "The child is to be called David Hartley," in the

hope that, in due time, "his head will be convinced and his heart saturated with the truths so ably supported by that great master of Christian philosophy."

It is clear that already troubles, personal and domestic, were leading our poet, in spite of his speculative tendency, to put devotion before discussion. In the summer of 1796, he had been eagerly studying Jacob Böhme and other Christian mystics: and towards the end of the year we find this remarkable entry in his note-book:—"Our quaint metaphysical opinions are, in the hour of anguish, like a plaything by the bedside of a deadly sick child."

And now, in December, 1796, with a baby in hand and a boarder in prospect in Charles Lloyd, Coleridge's heart was set on a home at Nether Stowey, near his beloved Poole. He fancied he had "exhaled his poetic vanity and his political ardour." His purpose would be to earn enough for plain living by manual labour; and so not to have to sell his genius but respect it and follow its inspiration. With £40 a year earned by writing for the papers and magazines, and an acre and a half of land to cultivate, they ought to do very well, especially when the healthy, out-of-door exercise had made him strong enough to do without butcher's meat. "I mean to work very hard," he writes, December 11th, 1796, "as cook, butler, scullion, shoe cleaner, occasional nurse, gardener, hind, pig protector, chaplain, secretary, poet, reviewer, and omnium-botherum shilling scavenger. In other words, I shall keep no servant, and shall cultivate my land-acre and my wise-acres, as well as I can. . . . I wish that little cottage by the roadside were gettable." Of course, if Charles Lloyd became a permanent boarder, paying his £80 a year, they could live more comfortably, and keep a maid, "and I," says Coleridge, "will instruct her in cooking." There had been some talk of a house at Adscombe, near Stowey; but this plan failed, and the only other available residence was that small plain cottage

on the village street. Perhaps Cottle and other Bristol friends thought Thomas Poole rather selfish in trying to get Coleridge all to himself in the seclusion of Stowey; perhaps Poole fancied that the poor little cottage could not be made fit even for Coleridge's small requirements; at all events, he raised several objections, and recommended, as a more suitable home, Acton, near Bristol. At this, Coleridge was grievously disappointed, and he wrote vehemently to Poole, as if he feared some falling off in his affection. There was no one at Acton, he declared, that he cared a rush for, and the country was as flat as Holland; there was no need of his living near Bristol, as Cottle had promised to correct proofs for him; at Stowey, his days would be given to farming, his evenings to literature (that is, he hoped to live the Pantisocratic life under the Quantocks, instead of seeking it on the banks of the Susquehanna). With wife and child, he continues, his own thoughts, nature in her rich beauty all about him, and Poole to look in upon him once or twice a day, what more could he want in the way of society? Mr. and Mrs. Estlin quite approved this plan of simple living, thinking it not only "highly virtuous, but highly prudent"; and, in short, unless Poole had some secret motive which he had not expressed, he would secure the little cottage by the roadside *at once.*

It was secured, with its acre or so of garden and orchard at the back. The rent was to be £7 a year; and at the end of December the Coleridges were settled in there with as much comfort as the thoughtful care of Thomas Poole and Charles Lloyd could achieve.

This matter off his mind, Coleridge found calmness and leisure in the last days of 1796 to write his "Ode on the Departing Year." Here, in the midst of fervently-expressed despondency at the state of Europe and our national dangers, we have, in the seventh stanza, a more gentle, hopeful tone, suggested, probably, by the quiet

peacefulness of his beautiful new home in West Somerset:—

> Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
> O Albion! O my mother isle!
> Thy valleys fair as Eden's bowers,
> Glitter green with sunny showers;
> Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells
> Echo to the bleat of flocks;
> (Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
> Proudly ramparted with rocks)
> And ocean mid his uproar wild
> Speaks safety to his Island-child!
> Hence for many a fearless age
> Has Social Quiet loved thy shore;
> Nor ever proud invader's rage
> Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with gore.

The year and a half that Coleridge spent at Stowey was probably the happiest, as in poetry it was certainly the most productive period of his chequered life. At once recovering health and spirits, he wrote thus cheerily to the friendly Cottle:—

> We are all—wife, bantling, and self—remarkably well. Mrs. Coleridge loves Stowey, and loves Tom Poole and his mother, who loves her. . . . Our house is better than we expected—there is a comfortable bedroom and sitting-room for Charles Lloyd, and another for us, a room for Nanny, a kitchen and outhouse. . . . We have a pretty garden . . . and I am already an expert gardener. . . . A communication has been made from our orchard into T. Poole's garden, and from thence to Cruikshank's, a friend of mine, and a young married man, whose wife is very amiable, . . . and from all this you will conclude we are happy.

Again, in February he wrote to Thelwall:—

> We are *very* happy, and my little David Hartley grows a sweet boy. . . . I raise potatoes and all manner of vegetables; have an orchard; and shall raise corn (with the spade) enough for my family. We have two pigs, and ducks and geese. A cow would not answer to keep; for we have whatever milk we want from T. Poole.

If Coleridge wished for quiet study or meditation, there was the pleasant book-room upstairs at Poole's,

and in his garden the jasmine arbour, which seemed to the poet a sort of Elysium. Cottle[1] tells us of a simple, cheerful feast in this arbour on "bread and cheese and true Taunton ale," when pretty young Mrs. Coleridge came to join them with her boy in her arms, bringing with her the smile of home; and everyone was so happy that there seemed to be "downright witchery in the provisions."

Little David Hartley was scarcely five months old in February, 1797; but as he lived on with his mother at Stowey until July, 1799, the first dawn of self-consciousness must have come to him in that pleasant home. Somerset, therefore, has so far a right to reckon among her poets this delightful, ill-starred genius, whose sonnets, for their concentrated force and beauty, and for their self-revealing charm, occupy a worthy place beside those of Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth.

Coleridge's Sundays were usually spent in journeying to Bridgwater or Taunton to preach in the Unitarian chapels.[2] He frequently travelled on foot, and never took a fee. Whether he preached in a blue coat and white waistcoat, as at Bath in the previous autumn, we do not know. But rumour says that Joshua Toulmin, the resident minister of the Mary's Street Chapel and the first historian of Taunton, tried to counteract the poet's want of Unitarian orthodoxy with a sermon on the text, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Week-days were fully occupied with instructing Lloyd, nursing Hartley, cultivating potatoes, writing the tragedy of "Osorio," at the suggestion of Sheridan, studying

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1 One of Cottle's amusing stories of a meal at Alfoxden off bread and lettuce, and of the maid showing the poet how to relieve the horse of his collar, is given in Paxton Hood's *Wordsworth*, p. 101.

2 Coleridge seems only to have been attached to Unitarianism for about eighteen months; being attracted at first by its promise of a rational theology, he soon found himself repelled by its material philosophy. Besides, he was presently convinced that the Trinity of the Divine Nature was the highest Reason. (See W. Hunt's *Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 93.)

Berkeley's philosophy, and learning from Poole the mysteries of tanning. Then, besides Cottle, who came on publishing business, there would be other congenial visitors at Nether Stowey: the poet's devoted admirers, the renowned potters, Thomas and Josiah Wedgwood; young Humphrey Davy, the wonderful chemist from Penzance, whom Beddoes was setting over his laboratory in Bristol; and John Foster, the essayist, who, after meeting Robert Hall and Coleridge, said that Hall used his words like an emperor, but Coleridge like a necromancer, with more vivid and subtle powers.

In June, 1797, Coleridge took a step of the greatest importance for his future life and influence: he went across the county to Crewkerne, and stayed with William and Dorothy Wordsworth in the farmhouse at Racedown. They were at once drawn to each other by the strongest ties of admiration and sympathy. The poets even admired one another's dramas—Coleridge's "Osorio" and Wordsworth's wearisome "Borderers"; and with truer judgment, Coleridge wrote to Cottle of Wordsworth's story of Margaret, now printed in the first book of the "Excursion":—

> He has written near twelve hundred lines of blank verse, superior, I hesitate not to aver, to anything in our language which any way resembles it.

The Wordsworths returned Coleridge's visit at once, so that they saw our beautiful Quantock country for the first time early in July, 1797. This was Dorothy's impression of it: "There is everything here—sea, woods as wild as fancy ever painted, brooks clear and pebbly, as in Cumberland, villages so romantic. . . ." Once they wandered up a dell with a sequestered waterfall, till they came out at Alfoxden. There they paused to admire the view, and indulged in "dreams of happiness in a little cottage and passing wishes that such a place might be found." Seldom have dreams and wishes found

so quick and pleasant a fulfilment: the man who was farming the estate for Mrs. St. Aubin, during the heir's minority, was ready to let the house furnished for £23 a year. The Wordsworths closed with the offer, and after a fortnight's stay in Coleridge's cottage, they settled in on July 15th, with one servant and a small pupil of five years old, the son of Basil Montagu. Again we have Dorothy's description:—

> The house is a large mansion, with furniture enough for a dozen families like ours. . . . Wherever we turn we have woods, smooth downs and valleys with small brooks running down them . . . the hills that cradle these valleys are either covered with ferns and bilberries,[1] or oak woods, which are cut for charcoal. Walks extend for miles over the hill-tops, the great beauty of which is their wild simplicity.

The nature of the intimacy which now ensued—"three people but one soul," as S. T. C. describes them—may be read in Dorothy's Alfoxden journal and in the conversational poem, "The Nightingale," one of Coleridge's contributions to the "Lyrical Ballads." They met almost every day, Dorothy cementing their friendship with her ready sympathy, and stimulating their poetical faculty with her "keen observation and rapid suggestion." It was, indeed, a critical time for our two poets, and through them for English literature. As they had the highest mutual esteem, Wordsworth considering Coleridge the only "wonderful" man he had ever met, and Coleridge feeling himself "a little man beside Wordsworth," they were prompt to learn the helpful lessons which each was able to supply to the other. And, in fact, the one could give just what the other most wanted. Wordsworth, of harder northern fibre, gave to Coleridge's softer southern, dreamy character the resolution and self-restraint in which it was deficient. Coleridge's more subtle, penetrating discourse, as they wandered over the downs or sat together in combe or glen, instructed

[1] Really, wortleberries.

Wordsworth in systematic thought and in clearer and sounder principles of art. In reference to their poetry, Wordsworth's influence added the force of distinctness and lucidity to Coleridge's splendid dreams, whilst Coleridge supplied philosophy and reasoned support to the edifice of Wordsworth's poetic convictions, and the result was such poems as "The Ancient Mariner" and "Tintern Abbey."

Coleridge, with all his admiration for his "William and Dorothy," had not forgotten his old friends, though they were inclined to think that he had. No sooner had the Wordsworths left his cottage for Alfoxden than they were succeeded by the poet's devoted schoolfellow and life-long disciple, Charles Lamb. He was very silent, for as yet time had not healed the terrible blow of the previous September, which was to leave its mark on his whole life; but the beauty and the quiet of our west country greatly refreshed his spirit, and he became one of the best-beloved of the Stowey brotherhood. Wordsworth read him his poems in manuscript; and when he had returned to town, Lamb, in a grateful letter, begged for a copy of one of these—"Lines left upon a seat in a yew tree." Written in 1795, they were first printed with "Lyrical Ballads" in September, 1798; and the close, which probably most impressed Charles Lamb, tells us that "true knowledge leads to love," and draws a happy distinction between pride and proper self-respect.

Poor Coleridge met with an accident on the very morning of his friend's arrival, which kept him at home all through the visit; but he has left us some charming verses, written from "the lime tree bower, my prison," in which he pictures his friends resting in the poet's glen, with its waterfall, or from the "springy heath" on the hill top enjoying the grand views of the sea with its two islands and the distant coast of Wales, and, on the other hand—

> The many-steepled tract magnificent
> Of hilly fields and meadows.

He only prays that the clouds may "richlier burn," and the "purple heath-flowers" "shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb" to cheer "the gentle-hearted Charles."

Charles Lamb had hardly left the hospitable cottage when another visitor appeared. This was John Thelwall, a rather narrow republican and sceptic, so far only known to Coleridge by letter.[1] Having been imprisoned for treason, Thelwall, weary of politics, was looking out for a quiet country home, where he could farm, and bring up his family; and his admiration for Coleridge brought him on foot to Nether Stowey. One of Thelwall's theories was that it was unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it had come to years of discretion. "I showed him my garden," says Coleridge, "and told him it was my botanical garden. 'How so?' said he; 'it is covered with weeds.' 'Oh!' I replied, 'that is only because it has not yet come to its years of discretion and choice. The weeds, you see, have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair to prejudice the soil towards roses and strawberries.'" This, no doubt, was a very wholesome parallel for Thelwall; but it shows that Coleridge was not the "expert gardener" which he had promised to be.

During three days spent with the Wordsworths at Alfoxden, the friends were enjoying the beauties of the poet's glen. "Citizen John," said Coleridge, "this is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world." "Nay, Citizen Samuel," replied Thelwall, "to make one forget them altogether." And

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1 But he and his friends had been pilloried in the *Anti-Jacobin* with Thelwall, as all alike admirers of a dangerous French democrat called Lepaux.

"Thelwall, and ye that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted,
Praise Lepaux!
And ye five other bards that move
In sweet accord of harmony and love,
Coleridge and Southey, Lloyd and Lamb & Co.,
Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux!"

in this case, the smaller man—for Thelwall was distinctly rather a poor creature[1]—said the wiser word. Not finding what he wanted in Somerset, Thelwall settled at Lliswen Farm, on the Wye, where Coleridge and Wordsworth paid him a visit in 1798.

Meanwhile, the literary labours of our poets had been devoted to their dramas. Having completed his "Osorio" by the sixth of September, Coleridge took it with him to Shaftesbury to show it to W. L. Bowles, then rector of Chickdale. Bowles' thin volume of fourteen sonnets, published at Bath in 1789, had been enthusiastically welcomed by Coleridge, who was still at Christ's Hospital, as the first definite revival of the poetry of nature. So great was the zeal of the schoolboy poet that he made forty copies of the sonnets to give to his friends. But though a true poet and a good man, scholarly, antiquarian and benevolent, Bowles was certainly not a great man, and Coleridge seems to have returned from his visit considerably disillusioned. When he was staying at Calne in 1815 he was often discoursing with Bowles at Bremhill Vicarage; but he presently alienated the elder poet by undertaking the thankless task of correcting his poems. "He took the corrections," he says, "but never forgave the corrector."

Both the dramas "Osorio" and "The Borderers" being finished and sent off on their vain mission to Drury Lane in October, in November a new plan was started, which led to much greater results. With Dorothy, their usual companion, Wordsworth and Coleridge set out for a walking tour through Watchet and Porlock to Linton and the Valley of Rocks. To meet expenses, they were to write together a short poem, for which the *Monthly Magazine* might give them five pounds. They began "The Ancient Mariner," Coleridge taking the idea of the phantom ship from a dream told him by Cruikshank,

[1] See J. D. Campbell, in Macmillan's *Coleridge*, p. 36.

and Wordsworth suggesting the death of the albatross from Shelvocke's "Voyages," which he had been reading a few days before. But as the subject grew in their hands, they found their style too unlike for joint composition; besides, the poem promised to be too long for their original purpose; so they resolved to make a greater effort, and produce instead a volume of poems, in which each was to supplement the other in his own style. Coleridge was to show the power of the imagination to give reality to the ideal, the romantic, the supernatural; and for this purpose he wrote, besides his masterpiece, "The Ancient Mariner," the splendid fragment of "Christabel" and the opening of "The Dark Ladie," with its exquisite introduction, "Love,"[1] the most perfect poem of its kind in the language. It was Wordsworth's part to show that sincere natural feeling can lift into poetry the simplest scenes and experiences expressed in simple words; and if simplicity sometimes verges on triviality in such poems as "We are Seven," "Anecdote for Fathers," "The Thorn," "Good Blake," and "The Idiot Boy," we have with them, in the "Lyrical Ballads," such fine specimens of Wordsworth's peculiar genius as "Simon Lee," "Expostulation and Reply," "The Tables Turned," "The Last of the Flock," and the deeply suggestive lines on Tintern Abbey. The little book, published anonymously by Cottle[2] at Bristol, in September, 1798, fell almost dead from the press. Some months later, practical Mrs. Coleridge wrote to her husband in Germany, where he and the Wordsworths were seeking to drink of the stream of revived romanticism at its source: "The 'Lyrical Ballads' are not liked at all by any." And yet, with the "Ancient Mariner" and these characteristic poems of Wordsworth, the book certainly

1 These, however, were not published till later, "Love," in the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1800; "Christabel," with "Kubla Khan," not till 1816.

2 He paid the poets thirty guineas for the copyright.

surpassed in imaginative and reflective power any single volume of verse since the death of Milton.

Nor were the "Lyrical Ballads" the only poetical results of the intercourse and mutual stimulus of our poets during the happy year they spent together in West Somerset. Besides the rather trying "Peter Bell," written at Alfoxden in 1798, but not printed till 1819, Wordsworth carried with him from the Quantocks into Germany the inspiration which, in 1799, produced such fine poems as those on "Lucy," those addressed to his old schoolmaster, "Matthew," and "Ruth." Coleridge, meanwhile, in the spring of 1798, had sent to the *Morning Post*, at the invitation of Daniel Stuart, the editor, the very beautiful lines, "Frost at Midnight," "The Recantation," or "France," which Shelley considered the finest ode of modern times; and "Fears in Solitude," in which he draws a striking contrast between the present peace —as from his glen in the Quantocks, at sunset, he hears the lark

Singing like an angel from the clouds,

—and the horrors of war which threatened, at any moment, to devastate the country. These three poems were republished in the summer in a thin quarto.

Coleridge's anxiety about a fixed income had almost nipped in the bud his contributions to the "Lyrical Ballads." Restless under the sense of dependence, in January, 1798, he was spending three weeks at Shrewsbury, with the notion of taking Mr. Rowe's place there as Unitarian minister. Part of the time was spent with the elder William Hazlitt, at Wem; and one morning a letter came from the brothers Wedgwood, offering the poet £150 a year, that he might give himself to his vocation as student and writer. No prospect could have been more delightful, and Coleridge made up his mind to accept the generous offer while he was tying on one

of his shoes.[1] He was thus set free to work on at his "Ancient Mariner," "Christabel," and other poems.

Young William Hazlitt, enchanted with the poet's preaching and conversation, found his spirit unchained and his lips opened under the magic influence. He was invited to Nether Stowey, and in April he paid the visit of which he gives such a graphic account in his essay, "My first acquaintance with Poets." He divided his time between Coleridge's cottage and Alfoxden: listened to the poets reading their verses, discussed philosophy with them, and joined Coleridge and his devoted disciple, John Chester, in a walk to Linton.

"The Ancient Mariner" had been finished in March, and "Christabel" was making good progress in April, when it was interrupted[2] by a very untoward event. This was the temporary estrangement of Charles Lamb, brought about by the melancholy and meddlesome Charles Lloyd,[3] himself offended by some humorous sally or some fancied slight of his old master. Coleridge was so depressed by this coolness that he retired to a lonely farmhouse near Porlock, and even took laudanum—he says for the first time—as a refuge from his mental distress. Under the influence of the drug he had that wonderful vision, of which "Kubla Khan" is the surviving fragment. The misunderstanding with Charles Lamb was soon cleared up, and it has left us two very beautiful poetical memorials besides "Kubla Khan": "The old familiar Faces" of Lamb, and the lines 408-425 in the second part of "Christabel," which Coleridge considered "the best and sweetest" he ever wrote. But "Christabel" was never finished, and its place amongst the "Lyrical Ballads" had to be filled with a larger proportion of poems by the more steady-going Wordsworth.

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1 So Hazlitt says.

2 Possibly! See J. D. Campbell's Introduction, p. xlii., Note *.

3 "He is a sad tatler. . . . Twenty years ago . . . he almost alienated you from me, or me from you. . . ." (C. Lamb to S. T. C., January 10th, 1820.)

In May, another baby boy, bringing fresh life and joy with him, came to find room in the Coleridges' small cottage. He was called Berkeley, in honour of the saintly philosopher whose works, with those of Spinosa and the Neo-Platonists, had lately been the objects of his father's study.

And now their pleasant days in West Somerset were nearly ended. From the first, our poets had been suspected republicans; Thelwall's visit confirmed the suspicion; a spy was sent from town to watch them; and Mrs. St. Aubyn positively insisted on Wordsworth giving up Alfoxden at Midsummer, 1798. Wordsworth was held in most fear, being less known and more solitary; Coleridge was looked upon as more safe, because he lived in the village street, and had babies like other people.

But these great teachers of joy and trust would not mope. As the close of their happy time together drew on, they threw themselves all the more into the enjoyment of that beautiful country in an exceptionally fine summer, and made the most of their refreshing intercourse with each other and with their common friend, Thomas Poole. For Wordsworth was as much impressed as Coleridge with Poole's sterling worth, and seems to have had him in his thoughts in pourtraying "Michael" and other characters of his highest regard. How feelingly, at the end of the "Prelude," which he dedicated to Coleridge, and read to him on his sad return from Malta in 1806, does Wordsworth recall

> That summer under whose indulgent skies,
> Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved
> Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan combs. . . .

Thus, as a settled home, the poets left our western hills in the summer of 1798, and went forth bravely to equip themselves more thoroughly for their life's work of helping others to be good and happy. But neither Somerset nor Thomas Poole lost sight of them altogether. Mrs. Coleridge with her two boys had been left in Poole's

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charge at Nether Stowey; and little Berkeley sickened and died in February, 1799, during his father's absence. For the time, this was a crushing blow to both parents; but when Coleridge returned in July, he was cheered by a hearty reconciliation with his brother-in-law. Southey and his wife were staying at Minehead. Coleridge having written a conciliatory letter, Poole invited them to Stowey, and the complete amity of the old friends was shown in their concocting together the notorious "Devil's Thoughts." These verses, printed in the *Morning Post* for September 6th, were very popular, and had many imitators. The last line of the sixth stanza, written by Coleridge, has become a household word:—

> He saw a cottage with a double coach-house,
> A cottage of gentility!
> And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
> *Is pride that apes humility.*

After this pleasant reunion at Stowey, the Southeys went on to Sidmouth, and the Coleridges to the old family home at Ottery St. Mary's. Coleridge also made a tour in Devon, which he declared to be inferior to Somerset in everything, except, perhaps, the views of Totnes and Dartmouth, and "clouted cream, bless the inventor thereof."

Our poets never met again in Somerset. Wordsworth did not visit Stowey for more than forty years, and when he came there with friends, in May, 1841, Poole had been long dead. Wordsworth found that the "tall larch" in front of the house at Alfoxden was little changed; he regretted the loss of its neighbour, a venerable banyan-like beech; and he fancied that the poet's glen had lost some of its rustic beauty.

Southey, with his son Cuthbert, paid Tom Poole a visit in October, 1836, when Mrs. Southey had been sadly ill, and he much needed change and rest. On his way, he had revived old memories at Bristol, staying with Cottle at Bedminster, when he also met at Clifton his

staunch friend and patron, Walter Savage Landor. Then he had spent some days at Wells, and at Bremhill Vicarage with the eccentric, painfully timid Bowles. From Nether Stowey he and Cuthbert passed on to stay with Sir Thomas Acland at Holnicot, the Earl of Devon at Powderham, Mrs. Bray at Tavistock, and Derwent Coleridge at Helston.

Coleridge would have lived on at Stowey if the cottage could have held his load of books from Germany. A suitable house at Aisholt would not do for Mrs. Coleridge, who was fond of company. By December, the Wordsworths had established themselves in Dove Cottage, Grasmere; after some months in London, reporting for Stuart and completing his "Wallenstein," having searched once more in vain for a home in West Somerset, Coleridge paid them a visit of some weeks, and then, on July 24th, 1800, settled with his family at Greta Hall, by Keswick; which, from September, 1803, the Southeys shared with them.

But neither Southey nor the far more congenial Wordsworth could make up to Coleridge for the loss of Poole; and when domestic disappointment, ill-health, and shattered nerves beclouded his naturally cheerful spirits, he always looked to Nether Stowey for light and refreshment. In 1801, Poole gave up his business with his old house to his partner, Ward, building himself a new, substantial house nearer the church, with a delightful book-room upstairs. In this new home Coleridge was a welcome visitor from December, 1801, to February, 1802, when he quickly recovered from his growing depression. He was there again in February, 1803; and yet, in answer to a desponding letter, Poole wrote in April, pressing him to come again:—

> I need not tell you that if you think the South of England better for you than the North, come here! . . . I have made a nice, a very nice, book-room, in which you may regulate the climate as you like. . . . I promise to get you any book you want.

In June, 1807, after his two years' sojourn in Malta, Coleridge was once more, and for the last time, at Stowey. Mrs. Coleridge was there, too, with the three children, and of them we have this description by Poole in a letter to Josiah Wedgwood:—"Hartley is exactly like his father; Derwent is like him, too, but stronger-bodied, and with more of the common world about him; Sara is a sweet little animated fairy, like her mother's family in her child's mob cap, but like her father with her cap off." Coming for a fortnight, they stayed on very happily for two months. Coleridge himself, braced with Poole's "vigour, touched with tenderness," recovered his natural sprightliness, taught his boys Greek, and even wrote doggrel verses on Poole's lingering walks over his farm, and their propensity to bring him always at last to his dear cousins at Enmore. During this visit, Coleridge spent some days with friends at Aisholt, and some at Enmore Castle with Lord Egmont, who was fascinated, like everyone else who came into personal contact with him, and told De Quincey that he "talked very much like an angel." Other days were spent with the Chubbs at Bridgwater, where De Quincey, who had come over from Weston Lea, near Bath, to find Coleridge, seeing him in the street for the first time, knew him by his eyes, their "soft expression" and "dreaminess mixed with light."

Those two cheery months in our beautiful Quantock country left pleasant memories. In December, Mrs. Coleridge wrote Poole: "The children talk evermore of the happiness of Stowey." Nor for the children was it the last visit. Ten years later, in the summer of 1817, Hartley, the brilliant and unfortunate, was spending his vacation with Poole before winning his Oriel fellowship. His old nurse, Mrs. Guest, was delighted to see him, and the young ladies called him the "Black Dwarf." In May, 1823, Sara Coleridge was staying there with her mother. She was just nineteen, very beautiful, but inheriting, with much of her father's genius, too much of his ill-health.

During her visit, she persuaded Poole's cousin Bessie to turn from reading Byron to become a devoted admirer of Wordsworth.

And meanwhile, although Coleridge himself never stayed with Poole after 1807, and although pre-occupation hindered much intercourse even by letter, their friendship never died out. It was not of that sort, and, as occasion offered, it still found expression. When Coleridge was bringing out "The Friend," in weekly numbers, from June, 1809, to March, 1810, no one was so zealous as Poole in recommending his work; when "Osorio," changed into "Remorse," was well received at Drury Lane in 1813, no congratulations were more hearty than Poole's, or gave the author more pleasure. In 1817, Coleridge sent to Nether Stowey a copy of his "Biographia Literaria," containing what is still the most suggestive criticism of Wordsworth's poetry; and Poole wrote in reply:—"My dear Col.—I have never for a moment, since I first knew you, ceased to feel that sort of affection for you which neither time nor circumstance can displace. It is that affection which makes the person for whom it is felt a part of yourself." In 1821, Coleridge wrote:—"O that riches would make wings for me instead of for itself, and I would fly to the seashore at Porlock and Lynmouth, making a good halt at dear, ever-fondly-remembered Stowey," where, he adds, "Poole himself makes four-fifths of the pleasant associations." In 1827, Poole was staying with Coleridge at Highgate, in the house of the Gilmans, with whom, since 1816, the hard-driven poet had found a harbour of refuge.

In July, 1830, Coleridge sent, with a letter, the second edition of his important treatise on "Church and State," wherein he gives in a note the most striking word-picture that we possess of Thomas Poole, the self-cultured, independent, hot-tempered, tender-hearted, Somerset worthy, the friend alike of rich and poor, whose death, in September, 1837, left a gap in his own neighbourhood

that none could fill. In May, 1834, only two months before the poet's death, Poole had spent some hours with him at Highgate, and found his "mind as strong as ever," but "seeming impatient to take leave of its encumbrance"; and no wonder if we remember that his body was scarcely ever in good health, and that in his spirit, as Charles Lamb, his earliest friend and most bereaved survivor, said of him, "He had a hunger for eternity."

To dwellers in Somerset it should be a gratifying and stimulating thought that their own country was once the meeting-place of such philosophers and poets, and, for one eventful year, the home of the two greatest seers of modern times—Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth.

D. P. ALFORD.

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